RONNIE ROCKET
OR
The Absurd Mystery of
The Strange Forces of Existence
by
David Lynch

(Second Draft)

Black... fade in a giant stage... enormous with black curtains--open. The entire stage is filled with a wall of fire 200 feet high. Within the fire are thousands of souls screaming out silently... only the roaring of the fire.

FADE OUT.

There is a dark land where mysteries and confusions abound, where fear and terror fly together in troubled cities of absurdities.

Black clouds race by over a soot-covered city, where it is darkest night. Only a few tiny yellow squares of light in the old buildings and factories. Everything is so dark. Very little life is noticed except the tiny dark yellow squares. There are no cars seen from this high angle looking down over the city--no people out this night.

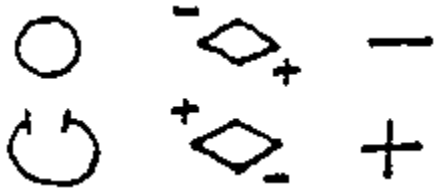
A closer look at some of the buildings reveals a thirties style architecture, although quite plain and very massive. Office buildings with heavy industrial factories. A smoke stack pours tons of heavy black smoke slowly and silently into the dark night sky. Hundreds of heavy electrical wires crisscross through the sky and electricity hums come from giant boxes on the poles. The headlights and then a car--it moves slowly below, down a street then turns out of sight. An old neon sign over a diner says "City Diner." A large old hospital and the front steps. Inside a nurse goes by wheeling a patient on a rolling bed. The corridor is now empty. Moving slowing through the empty corridor. An open steel door.

Down now two flights of cement stairs and along a dark and moist corridor off of which sit decaying subterranean hospital rooms. We hear the heavy machinery that keeps the massive building operating. Pipes leak rusted festering water into puddles on the cold floor.

Entering one of these small decaying rooms we see an old hospital bed. A dim name tag on the end of the bed bears the name RONALD DE ARTE'.

In the bed, under the white sheets, lays RONALD DE ARTE' who, because of some strange unnamed happening is now here quite disfigured. There is no human form to him really except he does have arms and legs, but they're under the sheets. The chest and head area are very strangely shaped, but there is a hole for a mouth and a nose. In the mouth there are teeth and a tongue which moves. There are two eyes above the nose hole. The eyes dart back and forth.

Suddenly, and quite mysteriously there is a detective now standing in this room. He wears black pants and shoes, a white shirt, a black jacket which is now hanging on a rack over against the cement wall. Over his shirt, he wears leather straps and a shoulder holster which supports a .38 pistol under his arm. He is standing, looking at the hospital bed. Ronald De Arte' is now making some sounds--very high pitched whines and is attempting to reach a piece of paper which lies on a moveable steel tale next to his bed. The Detective moves in closer and hands the paper to Ronald who contorts in order to get his arm over to it. More high pitched whines and a knocking of his hand on the table near a pencil which leaps with every hit lets the Detective know that Ronald now requires a pencil with which to write. Ronald very shakily scribbles out the following symbols and all the while he makes very long, high pitched whines:



The Detective takes the paper to a small lamp across the room and looks the symbols over. He folds the paper and continues to hold it as he turns toward Ronald again. He comes up closer to Ronald. Ronald makes some more noises. The Detective now is very close to Ronald looking into his eyes. Very faintly the big close up of Ronald stays double exposed as the Detective turns, gets his coat and goes quickly out of the room. Putting on his coat he looks suspiciously, left and right down the dark corridor--no one--he goes down the hall and disappears around the corner. No one is on the street as he crosses it to a large building where he stops and turns back to see if anyone is following him. He looks carefully all around him. Satisfied with the situation as it is, he turns

back again and goes down the street into the darkness. Ronald's CU fades. Now the Detective is in a train station. Several people are boarding a black steel train in a dimly lit passenger loading area. The Detective climbs aboard and finds a seat. Even with the lights on it is still so dimly lit. The cigar and cigarette smoke is very thick. People talk but not too audibly because the train and station sounds are so loud. It is a dull crowd of very poor working-class people. The train begins to move and rumbles through the night. At the first station nearly everyone lets off. An arcing of electricity and on again to the next station which appears to be the last because everyone gets off except the Detective. The people hurry through the underground station than all is deserted. The train continues to make sounds but doesn't move. A conductor appears and finds the Detective still aboard.

CONDUCTOR
(speaking loudly)
Off the train!!!

DETECTIVE
I want to go deeper into the city. I'm a detective.

CONDUCTOR
You a detective?

DETECTIVE
Yes.

CONDUCTOR
Train doesn't go far into the city... can only go one, maybe two, more stations... closed up beyond that... no one. You want to go, but only one, maybe two, stations.

DETECTIVE
Can I get another train to go further?

CONDUCTOR
No more trains ever beyond here never go... now three people.
(looks up with a "now this is curious" expression)

At this, two strange looking people slowly enter the train car from the other end and begin coming toward the Detective and the Conductor.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
'Board!!!

The Conductor leaves the car and the other two sit down and look at the Detective, then at each other, then down at the floor, then up at the Detective.

Outside the Conductor yells something which echoes in the background, then someone way far away yells. The Conductor yells again and the train begins to move very slowly ahead with much grinding metal sounds. Streaking along the train moves into even heavier darkness. Occasionally a light can be seen outside the windows but mostly all is black. The lights in the train dim down lower as a humming sound comes from above the trains. The train slows and enters a station. This station is empty and very old. It looks completely un-used. Papers and dirt are blown through-out, windows are broken, and most of the lights are out. The outside is suddenly lit up considerably by a huge electrical arcing of the wiring on the train. It stops and the lights inside come up slightly. The Conductor walks quickly into the car and as he goes by the three of them:

CONDUCTOR
Bad repair... electrical sparks!

Outside the electricity arcs again and the train jumps forward. It moves along slowly and the giant humming sound is now constant. The train goes through darkness then comes to an area where there are some lightbulbs strung on wires and then the train slows to a grinding halt. The two across from the Detective leave the train as the Conductor walks in.

CONDUCTOR
End of the line.

DETECTIVE
Is this the station?

CONDUCTOR
No one uses the station... all that's left. We have train trouble now... a bad place. Get off the train now... this is the end of the line. From here on you're on your own, Bub!

The Detective steps off the train and the train begins backing up out of sight. The Detective stands near a bulb. Moths fly against the bulb... over and over again they hit at it, trying to get at the light. The Detective watches the moths.

There are noises, the Detective turns. He is surrounded by snarling black dogs circling him--moving closer. The Detective freezes with fear. Now out of the darkness comes a group of men wearing black woolen overcoats, black hats, gloves and boots. They stamp their feet up and down as they slowly surround and move in closer to the Detective. They join with the dogs and become like the moths around the light bulb. Suddenly like animals they attack and quickly beat the Detective to the ground. One of the men "zaps" the Detective with a huge electrical jolt from an electrical hand gun which is shaped like a cattle prod. The Detective doesn't move. They continue to circle. They "zap" him again and the ground begins to smoke. Now laughing they storm off into the night with the dogs. The Detective strains to open his eyes and maintain consciousness.

DETECTIVE
(outloud to himself)
What has happened to this place?

Now out of the darkness comes an old man, TERRY. In fact, one of the two people that travelled on the train with the Detective. He is an older man--rather mean looking and wears one pant leg rolled up exposing a gauze bandage. He carries a fly swatter with him and from time, swats his sore leg at the bandage. When the sore is particularly acting up, Terry turns the swatter around and digs under the bandage with the wire handle.

Now Terry circles the Detective slowly--eyeing him.

TERRY
Get up... Get up here outa the light... I was supposed to meet you but had to get rid of that guy I was travelin with. Now you listen to me... and listen carefully... answer my questions too... You're new in this part of the city... right sucker?

DETECTIVE
Yes.

TERRY

Yes... Just what I thought... what a mess you seem to be too. I meet a lot of people and I can tell a few things about em... I can see that you are a mess.

DETECTIVE
Settle down... What do you...

TERRY
Don't try to tell me... I'll tell you... I can tell you that too. Believe me...

DETECTIVE
Well tell me then...

TERRY
You want to go further into the city. To the inner city.

DETECTIVE
Yes.

TERRY
Can you hold a thought?

DETECTIVE
What?

TERRY
Can you hold a thought?

DETECTIVE
I can think if that's what you mean?

TERRY
My God, we're going to have trouble. Let me ask you a question. Where did you get that ugly fresh face?
(silence)
Let me say it another way... How is it that you came to an arrangement of features, such as that which you are exposing to me now? Can you answer that?

DETECTIVE
No.

TERRY
This is unbelievable. Are you a detective?

DETECTIVE
Yes!

TERRY
OK smart guy... what are the three rules of a detective then?

DETECTIVE
--stay alert
--concentrate
--stay clean

TERRY
Right! Now... there's new rules in this part of the City see? NEW rules... say new rules.

DETECTIVE
New rules.

TERRY
That's right... It's hard to understand... HARD to concentrate... I don't know if you heard me?

DETECTIVE
Yes I heard you.

TERRY
What did I say?

DETECTIVE
You said it is hard to concentrate.

TERRY
Where?

DETECTIVE
In this part of the city.

TERRY
... that's right... now where you want to go... the inner city... it's impossible

to concentrate see? Huh Buddy do you comprehend what I'm telling ya?

DETECTIVE
Yes.

TERRY
So...?

DETECTIVE
So tell me what I have to do.

TERRY
Hell I suppose you want me to do it for ya too... You don't even KNOW?

DETECTIVE
Yes I know some things but not everything...

TERRY
God help us... we are rally gonna need it... Look at this Detective. HEY!! Let's get in off the street... this is going to take some time to explain.

Terry takes the Detective along a street lined with old cheap hotels. He leads the Detective to one of them. Outside the door a mangy black dog growls. The Detective jumps back.

TERRY
Hey, it's a dog is all.

DETECTIVE
I... I'm afraid of dogs... and they know it.

Inside, behind the desk, there is a clerk who's sleeping. The Detective rings the bell and the clerk awakens slowly as if he may have been drinking a lot.

DETECTIVE
How much is a room here?

CLERK
Three and a half a night, hot shot?

DETECTIVE
Oh yeah?

CLERK
(staring defiantly at the Detective)
Yeah... and you'll have to share the room with some knitters.

DETECTIVE
Knitters?!?

Terry quickly places his hand over the detective's hand as a signal for him to be quiet.

TERRY
That'll be fine... we'll share the room with the knitters.

CLERK
Who's rentin this room?... You or him?

TERRY
He's payin' for it and I'm makin' the arrangements... OK?... Is that OK by you?

CLERK
Yeah maybe so... You're in 5B... top of the stairs... turn left. That's three and a half in advance.

The Detective gives him the money and the clerk hands him the key to 5B. At the top of the stairs, he and Terry turn left and go to the door of 5B--open it--and enter a tiny hotel room. Old wallpaper, some floor lamps, and old iron bed and two filthy old women sitting in chairs at opposing walls... the knitters. One knitter is actually knitting. The other is sewing a button on a dirty old sweater. Terry digs into his wound with his fly swatter then looks closer at the sewing of the button. He smiles a curious smile at the detective. The knitters are talking while this is happening.

KNITTER #1
I feel terrible... I just have no energy and I feel nauseous.

KNITTER #2

I have a terrible cold... It's gone in the back of my throat now and in my ear.

KNITTER #3
Ahhh! Now you know how I felt... I felt horrible... remember I had two colds... the second one last week was the worst... I never felt so bad... Now it's in my chest... just wait till your's goes into your chest then you'll maybe know how drained I feel... just drained...

KNITTER #2
I guess I never told you about my back?

TERRY
(still leaning over near Knitter #1)
... close to the button.
(As Terry speaks the knitters shut-up)
See... the button?

DETECTIVE
Yeah?

TERRY
See?

DETECTIVE
Yes... I see the button.

TERRY
See the needle... the thread...

DETECTIVE
Yeah...

TERRY
(speaking as if any minute the Detective will suddenly "understand")
The needle goes in and out. The needle goes in... comes out... it turns around and then
(very loud)
IT GOES BACK IN AGAIN!!

DETECTIVE
(jumping back)
Yeah?

TERRY
Damn it! It's a symbol... Don't you understand a damn thing? Symbols... numbers... parables... mysteries. This is what I am tryin' to tell you about.

DETECTIVE
What's with the button, Terry?

TERRY
It's a process, see... of steps... a rhythm... involving a continuum, i.e., the THREAD you idiot!! And the needle... Now what do you suppose the needle stands for?

DETECTIVE.
I don't know.

TERRY
You don't know... well can you guess?

DETECTIVE
Well... possibly it's a-

TERRY
Yes?

DETECTIVE
Well possibly it's a-

TERRY
YES?!

DETECTIVE
I don't know.

Terry collapses.

TERRY
My God...

DETECTIVE

Well you tell me.

Terry walks over to Knitter #2.

TERRY
Look at this... a knitter... Look... two needles working... See? Look... yarn... a continuum... the fabric... the form.

DETECTIVE
Terry! What are you trying to tell me?

TERRY
I don't go around explainin' the unexplainable, Buddy.

DETECTIVE
Oh yeah. Well tell me Terry what we have to do... try to tell me in a realistic way... using words.

TERRY
It's not so easy.

DETECTIVE
Try...

TERRY
It's a man named Hank Bartells.

DETECTIVE
(stepping closer to Terry)
Yes?

TERRY
He's the problem.

DETECTIVE
(stepping very close to Terry)
Yeah... how so?

TERRY
He got all the electricity see?

DETECTIVE
Yeah?

TERRY
And he's got the electricity fouled up, reversed or somethin' so's its around the wrong way and all the power is suckin up light... he's making darkness as fast as you can pee your pants and with this darkness buddy comes confusion and this confusion gets stronger as you get close to him, i.e., Hank Bartells, which you've got to do but you can't do so if you did though you wouldn't even remember your own name... see?

DETECTIVE
If I lose consciousness... I die.

TERRY
Hey... It's the same with everybody here. So are you beginning to see a picture forming on the old Litmus paper.
(points to his head)

DETECTIVE
Not really Terry...

TERRY
Look here's a map see? Of the city.
(The detective looks down with Terry to study a map of the city)
... this here's the inner city where Hank is but no one's allowed to go there see? So's my friend or so called friend Bill see... he maybe was going to take you in there but now he won't so's anyway... he was that guy that was with me on the train and hey watch out for him, man, cause he's mean as hell... he'll kill ya... I gotta tell you.

DETECTIVE
He will?

TERRY
He sure as hell will.

DETECTIVE
Is it safe to talk here?

(referring to the knitters)

TERRY
(he walks over next to Knitter #2 and holds the top of her head)
You know what's inside here?... If you had a power drill you'd burn the damn thing out before you drilled even one half inch into this head. This is rock man... solid rock... Hell yes it's safe to talk here...

Terry comes back to the map and the detective.

TERRY (CONT'D)
What's on your mind?

DETECTIVE
How do we get into the inner city and find Hank Bartells... and stop him?

TERRY
Well... the inner city's locked up pretty tight like I told you but more and more its... well... more people is coming out of it... a lotta the electric trucks are coming out... the trucks pipe out the bad electricity... see so's... and like the donut men... they're comin' out.

DETECTIVE
The donut men?

TERRY
Yeah... and those men with those black coats... you know... the ones that zap you... so' if they are coming out there's got to be a way in... Bill knows one of the gates... he knows Hank supposedly... It's bad I'll tell ya... One way though is the dangerous way but it's... it's goin backwards.

DETECTIVE
Backwards.

TERRY

Yeah... memory lane stuff... scary dangerous stuff...

DETECTIVE
Whatya mean... Memory Lane.

TERRY
You know... starting with his parents and working our way back... and somewhere back there is that gate to the old inner city.

DETECTIVE
Oh yeah?...

TERRY
Yeah... So you think you can handle this kinda job Boy-o?

DETECTIVE
I can stand on one leg.

TERRY
Bull.

DETECTIVE
I can stand on one leg and give you the Detectives' Motto.

TERRY
This I gotta see.

The Detective stands up and then raises one foot so he can hold it with one of his hands. Across the room one of the knitters looks over.

KNITTER #1
My God look at that... He's standing on one leg... imagine.

DETECTIVE
The detectives' motto -
Stay alert
Concentrate
Stay clean.

TERRY (amazed)

People here can't hardly stand up anymore let alone go for a period on one leg believe me. We do stand on one leg for a moment when we walk. As one foot swings forward on the stride the other remains on the ground and for that moment we are technically speaking on one foot. However, we are in motion, not stationary. The balance is there but are we sure? Because in the next moment the other foot will be on the ground to save us from falling. It's not the same thing with you. You can maintain balance for possibly even minutes let alone seconds and this is remarkable. It's unbelievable in this part of the city. Or really, in any part of the city. Of course I've seen people stand on one foot while holding on to something with their hands.

MAIN CITY - NIGHT

Meanwhile, at the hospital, two men, DR. DAN PINK, and DR. BOB PLATINUM, sneak down to the hospital basement and look into each room, searching. When they find Ronald's room they enter. They move toward Ronald and he starts a high scream. They muffle him with their gloved hands, unhook his electrical apparatus, scoop him up and steal him away from the hospital.

They carry Ronald in an old sedan through dark streets to an old building. They go to a service elevator and travel to one of the top floors to a laboratory which the two of them maintain. It is equipped with black massive electrical appliances and gadgets. The walls are a yellow-green and all is lit by blue glowing fluorescent lights giving the place a scientific eeriness.

They sit Ronald in a very special electrical chair which has several tiers behind the back of the place Ronald sits. Each tier has new dials and cords and antennae and symbols. They take a blood test and spin the blood in a special jar. They check his tongue and eyes. They throw levers, turn dials and mumble things to themselves as they work. They work very quickly. Suddenly, something begins to smoke on one of the levels of the chair and Ronald begins to bounce up and down. There is a shuddering noise... the fluorescent lights waiver... then a small poof explosion and Ronald's head droops down. Quickly the doctors analyze the situation and brings thing under control. Ronald's head comes back

up and he looks around... dazed. The doctors study his eyes again. After studying for a while they turn to each other.

DAN
Bob, we made it... this is a specimen.

BOB
(excited)
Let's have a malted.

DAN
A malted???

BOB
(surprised)
Yes.

DAN
WHAT?

Dan stands up. He leaps and punches his friend hard on the jaw, smacking him hard and knocking him down to the floor.

DAN (CONT'D)
Malteds before we even hardly get a look at this!!! After all we've been through? We're going to work!!!

BOB
I meant to celebrate.

DAN
Hell no!!

BOB
I guess so, but why'd you hit me so hard?
(he pushes Dan back against a machine)
Don't hit me so hard.

DAN
All right, but let's get a look at this specimen.

BOB

Okay, let's get a look at this specimen what a beauty! You know, we can rally do something with this. Get the chart out.

They both go to the wall and Dan pulls down a wall chart entitled "The Average Handsome Man." Arrows point to specific features such as straight nose, clear eyes, ears not large, strong chin, good jaw, clear complexion, etc.

BOB
It's going to be some work.

DAN
We just have to take our time and think it through... NO MISTAKES THIS TIME, BOB!!

BOB
Whadda mean, Bob?! What happened last time? Whaddya mean, Bob? Scalpels, boy! We'll do it okay, just don't dwell in the past. The past is past.

DAN
Look, look, look... we'll do it! We'll just take our time and get it perfect! You know I'm a PERFECTIONIST!
(slams his fist into his hand)
I can't stand these mistakes and then you wanted a malted right away. What is it?!! You understand, right Bob, we're surgeons!

BOB
We're surgeons... I meant to celebrate. You really get to me. You want me to quit? I will... I've had it... no malteds, okay. No malteds, but stop dwelling in the past. Are we in the past? No!! Hell no, I'm not going to quit... we're in the present. Why go where you're not. It's gone.

DAN
Alright.

BOB

You can't bring it back, Dan. Face it... you can't change what's...

DAN
ALRIGHT!!!

BOB
... already happened.

DAN
Shut up. Just you be quiet. Look at this chart, okay? We're in the present... we're going to operate.
(Suddenly Dan has realized he has urinated in his pants. He looks down at the wetness.)
Damn!
(he looks back up at Bob)
Let's get some sort of idea where we stand with this specimen, Ronald De Arte'. Then we'll fix some malteds... alright Bob, alright?? Now, we're starting off. It's going to be one of our finest projects...

There is a knocking at the door. The Doctors turn as the door opens. In comes DEBORAH, a very small, very finely dressed and heavily made-up woman. The doctors obviously know her and have been expecting her.

BOB AND DAN
(in unison)
Hi Deborah.

DEBORAH
(excited)
Hello boys, let's see him.

The Doctors take her over to Ronald on the chair.

DEBORAH (CONT'D)
Oh, Sweeties... an awful lot of work for you... oh.

DAN
Don't worry about what he looks like now.

DEBORAH
He'll be all ours, won't he?

DAN
Yes, he will.

BOB
Yes, he will.

DEBORAH
Please come up to dinner now. I've been waiting dinner in my apartment for you, will you come now?

DAN
Deborah, we're just barely started.

DEBORAH
You have to eat, don't you

DAN
Yes, but...

BOB
I can't work on an empty stomach, Dan. I'm going to start shaking.

DAN
(disgusted)
Shaking, shaking, shaking... let's eat then! I'm going to take off my light,
(takes off forehead light)
and I'm going to pull three light plugs
(pulls plug)
and I'm going to put on my coat...

DEBORAH
Sweetie,
(she goes to Dan and takes him by the arm, then referring back to Bob)
Come, Bobby.

They exit after Bob struggles into his coat. (His lining of his coat was torn and his hand stuck in it.)

Upstairs, Deborah's apartment is extremely elegant. She has a big poodle dog and big vases of flowers. The poodle spends the entire

time laying on its back under the dinner table, panting. Deborah has an older women in a uniform serving the dinner. The dish this evening is a strange looking vegetable with clusters of leaves on it. They begin eating by breaking the leaves off and floating them in a bowl of water which sits in front of them. With special spoons, they spoon in small round balls which dissolve and make the water thicker. They then cut off parts of the remaining vegetable and dip it into the thickened water bowl and eat it. It has a spicy hot taste and they all breathe funny after eating each mouth full.

The conversation during dinner is dominated by Deborah, and the older uniformed lady listens to all of it from behind the kitchen door.

DEBORAH
... A little tickle, you know where, I mean now... oh, you can bounce too, Sweetie, and roll and bounce... oh, that's good! I have a tongue, you know, and right away I start using it, don't I? Right away I start using it because this is the way I believe. I have fingers, too, and right away I start using them because this is the way I believe. I take my time, hmm? And I have a breath... this breath... I breathe so quietly and softly on the neck.

The poodle continues panting under the table,

DEBORAH (CONT'D)
This is done over and over... and now I breathe all around... this is why I am breathing... because it makes a softness... the hair stands and the skin gets funny... you know... The whole thing is so pretty, like picture... like a furniture. Now the rubbing ...
(they both turn to her)

Behind the kitchen door the uniformed lady presses herself harder to the door to hear better.

DEBORAH (CONT'D)
The rubbing is something that I do because this is the way I believe. The

rubbing for me is beautiful... I am an artist, rubbing and rubbing. Sometimes I rub hard, sometimes I rub softly... sometimes my little fingers rub, rub, rub so softly... so tenderly. Bobby, you look tired, I think Dan will stay tonight.

BOB
But, he stayed last night.

DEBORAH
You will stay tomorrow night, Sweet, I promise.

Downstairs, Ronald sits in his chair in the laboratory. He looks lonely in this strange green room, many electrical sounds humming Moving closer to Ronald De Arte' at night in the laboratory. His eyes, confused... staring...

BACK IN THE DEEP CITY

Terry is still talking. The Detective is still standing on one leg. The knitters are knitting.

TERRY
... there have been stories of people standing on their hands but both of their hands... never only one. There's a man around the corner who supports himself on one hand and one leg... maybe you'll see him when we go get something to eat because he's usually out front of the diner. I knew a man once who could get out of bed without using his hands but then he'd usually fall over or get sick ya know? Nowadays with Hank reversing the electricity most people like to sit down or lie down. A lot of people have diseases now... you know... diseases?... physical disorders... Even if they are feelin' good sometimes after the trucks come around, they act funny from then on... In other words they get permanently changed you know... but you bein' able to stand on one foot is damned near unbelievable... damn good.

MAIN CITY - BOB AND DAN'S LABORATORY - DAY

It is foggy outside the Lab windows. Distant factory sounds are heard.

The doctors have opened Ronald up and are putting electrical components inside of him. After closing him, they leave a tube through the skin onto which they hook an electrical device that Ronald will always have to wear on his chest. Out of the device comes another tube and at the end of it there is a rubber bag and a small needle which is again inserted back into Ronald's skin and taped over with adhesive tape.

They use electricity in several foreign manners to carve Ronald's face and graft on new features. Unfortunately, these doctors aren't the artist they think they are. Their hearts are in the right place, and they have tremendous energy, but the results are far and away from handsome. The doctors are very serious while they work. They concentrate very hard and their faces contort in funny ways. It's now break time and Bob is bringing the malteds over to where Dan is by Ronald. As they drink their malteds they discuss their work.

BOB
What are you thinking?

DAN
I'm thinking that the ears will have to be really done well this time, Bob.

BOB
(sensing something)
I agree with that.

DAN
(carefully)
They're complicated. And always before we seem to hurry through the ears.

BOB
You want to divide up the work as usual? I'll take the ears and you do the nose or something?

DAN
(going around the bush)
Maybe...

(he reaches over slowly and turns a dial and Ronald moves some and opens his mouth. Inside the mouth the tongue starts flapping. He turns the dial down some.)

That mouth is going to be a problem.

BOB

Well, do you want to talk it through? Shall we start on it?

DAN

There's something else that we haven't thought about, Bob. And, that is hair.

BOB

I was going to say... yes, I know, hair, that is something to think about.

DAN

Hair...

(he downs the rest of his malted and stands up, pauses--moves close to Ronald)

... I'd like to do the ears, Bob.

BOB

You've been leading up to this! I knew it!! I know they weren't quite right last time. You want the ears? Well, I want the ears, too!

(he stands up)

I grafted them high last time... but, this isn't the point. I'm the ear specialist!!!... you've got no right taking the ears. You've only done one ear! I want the ears.

(he's trembling)

You've been trying to think of a way to get the ears. I know you. You've been lying awake nights thinking of how you could manipulate me into giving you the ears... and on THIS project! I've seen you planning ... I knew you were trying to get them from me, I knew it.

Bob strikes cut and smashes Dan in the face. A short fist fight follows and then...

DAN
All right!... You keep the damn ears!

BOB
(bleeding & panting)
No... You take the ears. It's not worth it. I'll work on something else. Maybe the hair or something.

DAN
(panting)
No... I'm sorry, Bob. We'll both work on everything. That way it'll be perfect. You take an ear and I'll take an ear. We just have to keep good measurements... WE'VE GOT TO KEEP GOOD MEASUREMENTS!!
(He buckles over and slams his fist into his hand for emphasis)

The laboratory is now lit for precision work and the chart of "The Average Handsome Man" has been moved in closer to the doctor's work area. They are each working an Ronald's head. The process involves a light foam over the skin and electrical instruments hooked here and there. Small electrical tools are used by the doctors to reform Ronald's skin. The foam hides most of the work. Dan is now putting the nose into place. Bob is assisting. Dan lifts the nose off the table (where he has been fashioning it). The area for the nose has now been cleared. Dan is just starting to place the nose.

BOB
That looks good.

DAN
If I can place it now, let's have the opening.

BOB
All right.
(He pulls some skin apart)

DAN
(placing the nose)

This is about the best nose we've ever done.

BOB
It is.

DAN
Hand me the cotter and then let's stitch this.

BOB
Hold it... let me plug it in.
(as he plugs the cotter in Ronald begins to make a strange noise. Bob adjusts a dial and the noise stops. He hands Dan the cotter)

DAN
Good.
(he begins a delicate burn all around the seam of the note and head, Bob begins a stitching process.)
... the ears will be next...

Later, Deborah is standing looking at Ronald and his new nose. The rest of Ronald's head is covered with foam except for the mouth which looks like it always has.

DEBORAH
This nose reminds me of a small pillow it's so soft looking. I like it very much. You are rebuilding this boy... he is so fortunate to have you two.

Dan and Bob smile. Deborah walks slowly crossing the room, then turns.

DEBORAH (CONT'D)
Bobby, come now... upstairs with me.

DAN
Go ahead, Bob. It's late, we're through for the night.

BOB
(smelling a rat)

Don't do anything till I get back.

DAN
I won't.

BOB
Don't even clean up anything... Promise?

DAN
I won't.

BOB
Do you promise?

DAN
(screaming)
I PROMISE!

BOB
Just go to bed...

DAN
I PROMISE... I PROMISE, I PROMISE!
(stamps his feet)

DEBORAH
Come, Bobby, Dan will behave himself.

Deborah and Bob are crossing her living room. It is fairly dark.

DEBORAH
Remember the yellow light bulb?
(she laughs, Bob is embarrassed)
I've got a new one for you, Bobby. And, some new wire. Happy? Hmm? ... Happy?

Bob smiles sheepishly.

Downstairs in the laboratory, Dan is over near Ronald and he is pacing around and around. Suddenly, he can't help himself... he decides to break his promise and plunges into work on Ronald. He begins to prepare the side of Ronald's head for an ear.

Upstairs Deborah and Bob are in bed. It is quite dark. Bob is on his hands and knees under the blanket and straddling Deborah, who is smiling and laughing as she reaches back to plug in a wire. Bob screams outs as yellow light glows out from under the blanket

illuminating Deborah's chin and sending a faint yellow glow around the wall. The light begins to blink on and off and Bob begins to laugh and scream, laugh and scream, in unison with the yellow light.

In the laboratory the next morning, Dan is still at work. Dense fog is seen out the windows. Dan already has one ear on and is working on another.

Upstairs, Bob and Deborah are crossing the living room. Deborah's poodle is whining softly.

DEBORAH
Hmm?

BOB
Yes.

DEBORAH
Better than ever before?

BOB
Yes. Deborah? Can I come up again tonight? Dan had two nights in a row.

DEBORAH
We'll see.

BOB
All right. Would you clean my hands again?

DEBORAH
Here, let me wipe your hand and face, Sweet.

(She begins to wipe Bob's face with a damp cloth she has been carrying. She wipes his face over and over again, and then she cleans his hands carefully.)

BOB
I guess I better go wake Dan.

DEBORAH

All right, my Sweet Cabini... fly away. Remember to try and sit up straight. You're getting round shouldered.

(She curves her hands over his shoulders.)

Take these sweets for you and Dan.

(She goes to the table and gets some very fancy large candies and gives them to Bob. He has to hold them with both hands.)

BOB

I'll have to clean my hands again now.

DEBORAH

Goodbye for now, Sweet.

BOB

Goodbye... maybe I should have cleaned my hands better... these candies...

DEBORAH

They're fine, Bobby. Your hands are clean. Now go wake up Dan... Goodbye.

BOB

(calling back as he goes downstairs)

Goodbye... I'll clean them again anyway soon for work. We're putting on the ears today!

It's hard for Bob to open the door to the laboratory while his hands are full of candies, but he finally manages.

Meanwhile, Dan hears Bob coming in, however, he's in a tickleish spot and has to hold several things in place, including a cord in his mouth. He can't hide the fact that he's been working on Ronald without Bob.

Bob enters and sees Dan. At first he smiles then he sees the ears.

DAN

Now you wait just a damn minute... I can't figure out how these ears got on here...

In a rage, Bob flies across the room. He wads the candies in his fists and he hits Dan over and over again.

DAN
I can't figure it!!

Later, the two of them are working very silently. Both are beaten looking. Dan has mussed candies stuck in his hair. As he rubs his eyes...

DAN
What was that? My eyes are still burning.

BOB
Your eyes deserved to be burned.

Suddenly, Bob moves a lot of the foam away with an air instrument and forgetting his anger, yells out...

BOB
Dan, look! He's looking good!!!

They push more foam away to get a look. They're both excited.

All the features on Ronald are well formed but they do not work well together. One ear is quite a bit larger than the other. And there is no hair at all. Several areas are not yet healed either.

DAN
... we've got the touch, Bob. We've got the touch. Let's come up to 15,000 on the device. Maybe we can speed that healing up.

BOB
That's a good idea.
(turns some dials)

DAN
All the fluid there is just left over, you know.

BOB
I know.

Bob crouches down and surveys the ears on Ronald.

BOB
The ears may be slightly off...
(he looks at Dan, Dan dives him a look back)

Bob removes more foam revealing the new Ronnie.

BOB
I mean, what can you say. Look at the quality... the workmanship.

They slap each other on the bank.

DAN
I'm a little worried about the hair.

BOB
He's got to have hair!

DAN
Well, we've got to do it then. What color do you think?

BOB
We've got a bunch of brown ones left.

DAN
All right, by God, let's use them.

LATER: The top of Ronald's scalp. Dan and Bob have put in several hairs. The hairs are long and wirey, and they have many more to place before Ronald will even begin to look like he has hair. He looks quite strange now with these few wirey hairs sticking out.

BOB
You keep going. I'm going to get us a malted. This hair is getting to me.

DAN
All right... me, too.

Bob goes over and scrubs his hands and gets going on a couple of malted milks. Dan remains sticking in more hairs--one at a time. Bob brings the malted milks over and Dan stops working and takes a drink.

BOB

My hands came clean.

DAN
They look clean... I'm going to suggest something and you can stop me if you want to, but I'm going to suggest it anyway... a wig.

BOB
A wig?

DAN
A wig.

BOB
A wig... that's a good idea. We'll stop sticking in hairs then?

DAN
We won't stick another.

BOB
Shall we get a brown wig?

DAN
(pause)
I've been thinking red.

BOB
Dan, you won't believe it but I've been thinking red, too.

Later that night Deborah, Bob and Dan are all staring at Ronald. He has on his new red wig of high wavy pompadore style hair.

DAN
It's perfect.

BOB
It's perfect.

DEBORAH
It is perfect, Sweets. Is he finished?

DAN
Almost, but we have to start him. You set, Bob?

BOB
All set!

DAN
Pull three light!!

DEBORAH
Oh!!

Bob and Dan each have several controls. They begin turning dials and pulling levers. The chair begins to vibrate some and Ronald begins to come to, but very slowly. From time to time he opens his mouth and emits strange sounds and also from time to time he blacks out altogether. Even when he's out, he twitches and bounces. When he begins to fade, Bob and Dad pour on the juice and the lights dim way down and there is an eerie glow. Deborah looks beautiful in the glow as she watches the spectacle. Slowly, Ronald begins to come to again. He looks very awake and his eyes roll about. He begins to move and he begins to scream. He starts to stand as he screams and vibrates violently when all the lights blow out. POW!!! All at once. Ronald falls back in his chair and is still, however, he looks awake now. The moonlight is illuminating the room slightly.

DAN
Scapels!

BOB
(looking down out the window)
I think we blew out the whole building.

Ronald moans and his eyes start rolling.

DAN
I hope he's all right.

DEBORAH
How will you fix the electricity?

DAN
They'll be on it soon, but last time it took hours. I'm afraid this is it for a while.

Ronald stops moaning and looks peaceful.

DEBORAH
He looks peaceful now... in the darkness. Is he all right honeys?

DAN
I think he's all right... we brought him around.

A CU of Ronald reveals open eyes and a dazed, peaceful look.

Bob, Dan and Deborah move to a window and look out on the city. Deborah turns to Bob and then to Dan. She gives Dan a slow tender kiss on the lips and then she gives Bob the same. The three of them stand close together looking out the window. Ronald sits looking around the room still tied to many wires and sitting low in the chair.

Some clouds go by slowly, and Bob and Dan and Deborah hugging now, watch the city and the sky.

Suddenly the power comes back on. Ronald screams bloody murder and is shot out of his chair twenty feet through the air. The wires stuck to him keep him from going any further. The lights in the room blink on and off and the equipment goes crazy with sounds and sparks. Dan and Bob rush to turn things off.

BOB
What happened?!!!

DAN
You forgot to turn the damn machines off, that's what happened.

BOB
I forgot?

DAN
Well, what does it look like?

DEBORAH
Sweets, stop.

BOB
I forgot?! What about you?

Bob shoves Dan and he trips over Ronald's wires. Bob hits Dan hard in the nose. The fight goes on all around Ronald who is also on

the floor. In and amongst the wires, Dan and Bob beat each other while Deborah is screaming for them to stop. Ronald sits up... the lights flutter several times, dim and then go out. This stops the fight and all is dark and quiet except for heavy breathing.

DAN
There must have been 10,000 volts through him.

BOB
I think we may have some trouble there.

DEBORAH
You're bad... you're bad, bad, bad.

DAN
Did you see him fly across the room? Like a rocket?

Sounds come up slowly.

BOB
Ronnie the Rocket.

DEBORAH
Ronnie Rocket.

Up close on Ronald. In the moonlight laboratory he says

RONNIE
Ronnie Rocket.

The other three turn to him in amazement.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOB AND DAN'S LABORATORY - DAY

Ronnie is now fitted with a small black suit with a nice white shirt. Bob and Dan now have the shirt open and they are in the last stages of fitting Ronnie with his electrical chest appliance. This is a life sustaining device which Ronnie will have to wear continually. It fits to his chest with little shoulder straps and one strap which goes around his torso. A series of electrical wires

come off this device and go surgically into Ronnie's body. One fat cord comes out of the appliance and it ends in a plug.

DAN
Don't tighten that strap too tight Bob.

BOB
I'm not.

DAN
See Ronnie? ... See the plug? You have to learn to plug yourself in every fifteen minutes... When you hear the little warning signal... otherwise you will...
(not wanting to upset Ronnie)
Otherwise you will feel... funny.

RONNIE
Funny.

DAN
Yes!!
(to Bob)
He said funny.

BOB
Can you say Bob?

RONNIE
canuu SayBob

BOB
Yes!!

DAN
You're all dressed now Ronnie... you're a little human being... can you say H U M A N B E I N G?

RONNIE
canuu... beann.

BOB
It sounded like he said can of beans.

RONNIE
Head canu bean.

DAN
Yes... H U M A N B E I N G. My God Bob... he can TALK!

INT. BOB AND DAN'S LABORATORY – ANOTHER DAY

Bob has painted yellow footsteps on the floor at one end of the lab. This is planned as a learning device in order to teach Ronnie to walk.

BOB
Ronnie, we're going to learn to walk!

RONNIE
WAAAA.

BOB
That's right, now, come here... that's it... now, put your foot... no, your right foot, right there on the painted foot step... that's it... NO!... on the painted footstep... there... Yes... Now... carry the other foot through the air like this... watch me... like this and put it on the next painted footstep... See? Watch me walk... then you do it... OK? Watch me first.

Ronnie watching Bob as he picks one foot up very high and carries it to the next painted footstep. Ronnie watches this strange walking; then he mimics it perfectly. The only problem is Ronnie doesn't ever smooth out his walk... He learns the high step and the high step is what he does from then on.

BOB
No Ronnie, you don't have to lift your feet so high... I was just doing that in order to very carefully show you the various phases of walking... Now you can stop this high step which I showed you and walk NORMALLY... walk NORMALLY.

RONNIE
MALLY.

BOB

Yes... Now let's walk around NORMALLY.

They begin walking again but Ronnie maintains this very meticulous high, long stride. Dan enters the lab carrying a box of electrical apparatus.

Even though he sees this strange sight of Bob and Ronnie, he smiles proudly... their son is walking!!

INT. DEBORAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

DAN
Look Ronnie, this is Deborah's apartment.

DEBORAH
I'm so happy you are finally able to see it.

BOB
I am too.

DAN
Can you say apartment?

RONNIE
Can you say partma.

DEBORAH
Come Ronnie, let me show you around.

Deborah takes Ronnie's hand and begins to lead him but her poodle dog stands up and begins to growl. Ronnie makes a small noise and leaps back. He shakes with fear.

DEBORAH
I think he's afraid of the dog... I will have it removed... I will have it removed Ronnie.

Slowly, so that Ronnie can see everything the three of them take him through the living room and dining room. His little eyes, darting here and there. In the kitchen. Ronnie high steps around looking at all the different shapes and textures. He spots the toaster. He goes to it and looks at his reflection in the shiny metal.

BOB

It's a toaster... look.

He puts a piece of bread into the toaster and pushes the toaster "on." As the toaster heats up a strange electrical disturbance starts in Ronnie's chest and soon he is emitting through his mouth a high pitched electrical scream. The toast blows out of the toaster scorched black and burning. Deborah screams. Smoke begins filling the room. Bob and Dan rush Ronnie into the living room. His little eyes are rolled back. Bob and Dan begin looking at various components of the chest-appliances.

DAN
It's the RZ factor again.

BOB
I think he really got too much the other night.

DAN
Yeah... what can we do? Maybe we should run him through again.

BOB
Hell! The work!

DAN
Yeah but the shielding's all gone to hell Bob... that jolt the other night...

DEBORAH
(worried)
Will he be all right?

DAN
Sure he will... we just have to keep an eye on him...
(Dan looks around)
turn something else on... turn the radio on.

Deborah goes over to a big floor model radio and turns it on. She turns the dial trying to find a station. She passes a station where a woman is singing a song. Ronnie almost leaps to the radio.

DEBORAH
Do you like that?... Do you like that song?

She tunes in the music. A beautiful melody is being sung by a women with a high clear voice. Dan stands Ronnie by the radio. There is a slight static sound. He adjusts a dial on the chest appliance. The static disappears and he stands back away from Ronnie. Ronnie suddenly opens his mouth and begins to mimic the woman's voice on the radio. He actually sings some very beautiful notes. Deborah looks amazed and she happily turns to Bob and Dan who also begin to smile.

BOB
What a voice!

DEBORAH
A singer!

Suddenly though the electricity goes funny again. Ronnie's voice causes tremendous static to build. The electrical complication causes a wild distortion in the woman's voice and before Dan or Bob can get to Ronnie the radio speaker is blown out with an explosion. The radio, having been destroyed, sits smoking silently. Ronnie begins to cry. Deborah is horrified and rushes to his side joining Bob and Dan.

DEBORAH
It's all right Ronnie... What can you do boys?

DAN
(worried)
We'll shield him good so unless he's near lots of power he'll be OK...

BOB
Yes this is it... this is what we will do.

DEBORAH
Good... I noticed he's developing several sores on his little face honeys. What is this?

DAN
It looks like acne.

DEBORAH
Yes it does.

BOB
(going to look for himself)
It sure does.

DEBORAH
What do you suppose is the cause of this?

BOB
It could be the electricity but...
(thinks)
how old is Ronnie do you think?

BOB
I don't know... twenty maybe.

DAN
Twenty. I'll bet he's sixteen... Look at that acne... he's high school age.

BOB
Probably sixteen, yes. I was overshooting it a little with twenty. Yes... probably sixteen.

DEBORAH
I think you're right... Oh how wonderful... high school age. High school was such a dream.

BOB
Yes, but he's not in high school.

DEBORAH
No... that's right... that's horrible.

DAN
We'll get him in high school then.

BOB
Oh I don't know... He's going to have to learn an awful lot before we could ever get him in high school.

DEBORAH
Oh do you think we can?

DAN
Ask Ronnie if he wants to go to high school.

Deborah does and Ronnie mumbles some sounds happily. She turns back to Dan and Bob.

DAN
We'll have to get him enrolled though... that will mean questions... we have to have a plan!

BOB
We have to think!!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOB AND DAN'S LABORATORY - DAY

Dan stands at a portable blackboard with a pointer stick and Bob stands back with Ronnie. All the letters of the alphabet have been drawn with chalk on the blackboard. Dan says a letter outloud as he points to it with his pointer stick.

DAN
A.
(he points)

Bob says the letter with Dan then Ronnie says it as he makes a smaller pointing gesture with his hand as if he had an imaginary pointing stick. B... C... D... E...

DISSOLVE TO:

Dan, Bob and Ronnie huddled together. Ronnie is speaking.

RONNIE
T.... F...

DAN
Right... now flip the penny like I showed you.

Ronnie flips the penny in the air with his little thumb and it bounces down on the floor... heads up, Ronnie bends down real low

and looks at it. Bob and Dan crouch down and look at it too then they look at Ronnie. They wait.

RONNIE
Head... T.

Bob and Dan smile proudly.

DAN
Good Ronnie.

BOB
Very good. Very good. Heads is T. Tails is F. Very good.

INT. BOB AND DAN'S LABORATORY - MORNING

Dense fog is outside the windows. Deborah is there with Dan and Bob and Ronnie and everyone is dressed up. Ronnie is saying the alphabet over and over again.

DEBORAH
Oh, I'm getting nervous.

DAN
Everything will be fine. They'll just probably ask a few questions then enroll Ronnie and we'll go home. When they ask for his school records just hand them this. I got this made up to show them. Just average grades, etc.

Dan shows this to Deborah.

BOB
I've changed my mind. You go ahead, I'll stay here.
(suddenly screaming)
I helped make that up!!
(referring to the fake high school transcripts).

DAN
OK! OK! and you're going. You're his uncle. You can go!! I'm sure many times several members of a family go to the

offices to register a boy for high school. I'm sure sometimes the grandparents go... It's an important decision and its a memorable experience... An experience to have in the memory for a lifetime. If should be shared by all members of the family. They may even wonder why more relatives aren't with us.

BOB
My God...

DAN
So you have to go!! That's all there is to it... understand!! No one will find out about us.

RONNIE
C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J,

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALL AND OFFICES

They enter the front hall of a large old high school and proceed to the school offices. They are as nervous as they can be. When they enter they are confronted by a very old stern RECEPTIONIST who speaks right up.

RECEPTIONIST
Can I help you? What is it you need?

All react to her stern manner.

DAN
(nervous)
Yes, we're Mr. and Mrs. Pink. We have an appointment with Mr. Murdough... the principal.

RECEPTIONIST
Who's the father?

DAN
I am...

RECEPTIONIST
Who's he then?

DAN
He's Ronnie's uncle.

RECEPTIONIST
I see.
(she looks at her watch)
I'll get him.... you're eight minutes late... I'm sure we haven't got three chairs in Mr. Murdough's office...

She exits and returns with MR. MURDOUGH

MR. MURDOUGH
(looking at the group carefully)
Come into my office.

RECEPTIONIST
By the way... I obtained a third chair for the uncle.

When they walk through the outer office everyone stares at Ronnie... including the principal. Once inside his office they face Mr. Murdough behind his desk. The door has been closed very hard by the receptionist.

MR. MURDOUGH
Hello Mr. and Mrs. Pink.

DAN
Hello Mr. Murdough. This is Ronnie and his uncle Bob Platinum.

MR. MURDOUGH
Hello Ronnie... Hello Mr. Platinum. Would you all be seated? Yes, good, now, you want to enroll Ronnie in our school?

DAN
Yes, we would.

RONNIE
Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X...

MR. MURDOUGH
Ah... yes... well.

RONNIE
B, C, E, E, F,...

MR. MURDOUGH
(worried)
Where did Ronnie attend school last year?

DAN
(voice shaking)
High School of Factories and Service, we have his records.

MR. MURDOUGH
Good, may I see them?

DEBORAH
Here they are.

RONNIE
P, Q, R, S, T, U, V...

MR. MURDOUGH
I see you have a complete list... also the office transcripts... usually we request this information ourselves this is unusual...

DAN
We wanted everything to be orderly... prepared... for our Ronnie... so he could begin... again... I mean... continue in higher education.

MR. MURDOUGH
We will have to give him an entrance exam of our own, I'm afraid.
(he studies Ronnie)
It is our policy on all transfers... it allows us to better place the student in a class where he will fit in. What is the chest appliance I see on Ronnie?

DAN
(answers for Ronnie)
He's recovering from an illness... He has to wear this... it must be plugged in every fifteen minutes.

MR. MURDOUGH
I'm sorry... every fifteen minutes, too. He's not a talker, huh?

RONNIE
F, G, H, I, J, K, L...

BOB
As his uncle I can truthfully say that he does talk... I've heard him.

MR. MURDOUGH
Yes... I meant he's probably somewhat shy.

BOB
This is what I meant.

DEBORAH
We hope this will be a good school for our Ronnie. He needs your co-operation, he needs the care... he needs the attention... this is the way we believe.

MR. MUROCUGH
I see.

DAN
When will the entrance exam be given?

MR. MURDOUGH
Right now if you like... Ronnie?

RONNIE
P, Q, R, S, T, U...

BOB
(to Ronnie)
Your test Ronnie.

Dan crouches down to Ronnie.

DAN
Ronnie... listen to me... Ronnie...
(the principal watches wide-eyed)

You're going to take your test now... all right? Ronnie? Your test... your test is now.

DEBORAH
Ronnie... the TEST... TEST.

RONNIE
B, C, D... E ... test.

DAN
Yes! NOW!
(to principal)
He's ready now.

The principal is staring at Ronnie and the group.

INT. TESTING ROOM AND SURROUNDING HALLS - DAY

This testing room is surrounded by wire reinforced glass so the student can be observed on all four sides. There is a large clock above the glass on one wall. Ronnie is seated in a desk and the stern receptionist is speaking to him. An extension cord and electrical box have been provided for Ronnie's electrical needs. Bob, Dan and Deborah have been allowed to watch but

They are outside the room looking in through the glass. They can just barely hear the Receptionist.

RECEPTIONIST
(to Ronnie)
This is not a party... this is not a rowdy night on the town. This is a TEST. This is a three part test... multiple choice, true or false, and essay. I will be watching, you, young man, so no funny business... You have one half hour... I might add that this test has been devised by Dr. Herbert Smythe of Freeport University.

RONNIE
Funny business...

The stern Receptionist turns and leaves the room but she remains for awhile at the glass until she sees Ronnie start filling in squares on the multiple choice part of the test.

DAN
(quietly to Deborah and Bob)
I told him just color in the blocks where he wanted to... we'll leave it up to fate.

BOB
I told him too Deborah...

SUDDENLY Ronnie starts flipping pennies and going, crouching down, looking then going back and marking his paper. Deborah looks at Bob and Dan.

DAN
(to Deborah)
He's on the true or false section now.

Just then the Receptionist appears again. She is shocked by what she sees Ronnie doing. She enters the testing room in a rage.

RECEPTIONIST
All right young man!!... What is the meaning of this? Don't think you'll put on over on me... or Dr. Smythe. You cannot fool Dr. Smythe.

The bell rings. Ronnie's head flies back and the Receptionist grabs the test from him and marches off. Bob, Dan and Deborah look worried.

Later in the principal's office they all wait as the Receptionist brings in the results of the entrance exam.

She hands them to Mr. Murdough. She looks very angrily at them all --then leaves.

Murdough looks at the exam and then at Ronnie.

MR. MURDOUGH
Ronnie Rocket.

RONNIE
Ronnie Rocket.

MR. MURDOUGH
You like mathematics?

Ronnie says nothing.

MR. MURDOUGH (CONT'D)
Are you interested in mathematics?
(getting no response from Ronnie he speaks to the rest)
He shows a definite gift in higher mathematics, quite a gift. The rest of the exam is mediocre, but as far as I'm concerned, he is eligible for our school.

Bob, Dan and Deborah share an incredulous look.

MR. MURDOUGH (CONT'D)
He's a puzzling boy. Does he have brothers and sisters?

DAN
No, he's an only child.

MR. MURDOUGH
I see, an only child, huh Ronnie?

Ronnie says nothing.

MR. MURDOUGH (CONT'D)
(looking at Ronnie)
He's got the blemishes they all seem to get at this age.
(he chuckles over this and tries to get them to chuckle along)
I had the blemishes bad when I was a youngster. Coal cities is where I grew up. The black coal dust clouds would blow all day and all into the night, it got the coal dust in my teeth and hair and all in the pores of my skin. All the kids had it bad. It's when I saw Ronnie here, I hadn't seen it quite like his since I was back in the coal cities. The factories here will do it, too. The coal, the smoke. The black smoke makes red sores. That always seemed funny to me... that black smoke would make red sores. All the kids sure had 'em. Reminds me just looking at Ronnie.

(he picks up the exam)
So this Ronnie Rocket is a mathematician, is he?
(all nod up and down)
Ronnie Rocket.

RONNIE
Ronnie Rocket.

MR. MURDOUGH
Yes, well you can start school on Monday, Ronnie.

At this, Ronnie's warning signal starts up on his chest appliance and he gets a queer expression on his face. He bends over slowly and walks to an outlet and plugs himself in. The principal watches this. Ronnie's face is forlorn, a far away look in his eyes. Deborah, Dan and Bob all look at Ronnie, and then at each other and Mr. Murdough then back to Ronnie who has found several dead flies by the window. He is gathering them together in his hand.

Terry and the Detective go along a filthy city street; walking. People going by wear a glazed, dazed, totally spaced out look.

TERRY
Things have gotten bad here... I can tell you... these people are in bad shape.

In a pastry shop across the street two shop owners stand behind the counter. A man stands in the middle of the square store and looks at the pastries.

MAN
Well I guess I'll get some of them...

The clerk is about to get the pastry for the man.

MAN (CONT'D)
No... I changed my mind. I'll take some of them.

The clerk moves to the new pastry.

MAN (CONT'D)
No... I'll get some of them.

The clerk moves again. The man looks up at the ceiling.

MAN (CONT'D)
How much ya want for the light up there?

EXT. STREET DEEP IN CITY - DARK CLOUDY DAY

Terry and the Detective continue walking toward the diner. The Detective stops to look at a man balancing on one hand and one foot.

TERRY
Hey let's go in the diner... get something to eat... Hey!!...
(sees the Detective looking at the man balancing).
That's the guy I was telling you about...
(goes to the man balancing)
He -
(referring to Detective)
can stand on one foot!

At this the man, incapable of receiving such shattering information, cries out in agony.

TERRY (CONT'D)
(to Detective)
Come on!

They enter the diner and sit at the counter. The place is fairly full; mostly vacant eyes low class people eating dull looking food. The counter has now become crowded as more people come in to the diner. It is steamy and hot inside. The grill is sizzling. The coffee machine is steaming. The man next to the Detective on his left is having a large bowl of soup.

TERRY
(to waitress)
Gimme some bacon and eggs will ya and a cuppa coffee.
(turning now to Detective - smiles slyly)
Do you know the symbolic meaning of an egg?

DETECTIVE
Terry...

(He frowns at Terry but the waitress is waiting.)
Cheese sandwich and a cuppa coffee.

Coffees are brought immediately. As he drinks his coffee the Detective watches the people eating... he watches the food being prepared. Everything here, at least, seems to be fairly normal. Terry's bacon and eggs arrive and he begins eating hungrily. The knitters have followed the Detective and Terry to the diner. They and some of their friends stand around outside talking about the Detective. "If only I was younger"... laugh... laugh... "and he can stand on one foot!" Inside the diner the Detective watches the man to his left slurping his hot soup. Now the Detective's sandwich is being prepared. He sees the cheese being placed on the white bread and mayonnaise being spread on the top piece of bread. The sandwich is put together and sliced in half with a big kitchen knife. On a plate it goes and the waitress sets it down in front of the Detective. He picks up one half and takes a big bite. He chews.

TERRY
How's the sandwich?

DETECTIVE
Pretty good.

TERRY
Yeah... you like that cheese huh?

DETECTIVE
Yeah.

TERRY
Cheese is made from milk.

Outside on the street suddenly people are running and acting crazy... Slobbering, unable to stand, spinning, falling, walking into posts or walls, dogs whimper and press themselves to the pavement. The knitters begin to walk backwards. A massive black truck with an enormous antennae is rounding the corner. The antennae issues forth tremendous electrical sparks and there is a loud humming and buzzing in the air. People are getting very confused.

INT. DINER - CONT'D

TERRY

AH OH... hold on buddy... Here comes the truck I was telling you about.

The electricity gets very loud. Suddenly the diner goes crazy. The man to the left of the Detective immediately puts his elbows in his soup. The Detective is suddenly off his stool with his chin pressed into the center of his cheese sandwich on the counter. Terry's hand wants to go down Terry's throat and Terry's teeth want to bite his hand. The waitress must be standing on her head because only her legs and feet rise up above the counter. Each person in the diner is having his own personal seizure from bloody noses to head pounding to tongue swallowing The Detective's eyes are rolling and his chin is flattening his cheese sandwich to the thickness of fine paper.

The door to the diner flies open and in comes a large fat man with a wild smiling face. His eyes bug out with each smile. In his arms he holds a box of powdered sugar donuts. In his hand is a nice donut, which he eats all at once. As he chews he happen, surveys the pandemonium.

Behind him a large gang of black coated men pour crazily into the diner. They begin zapping people with electricity!!! The Donut Man goes over to the Detective and leans down — looking him in the eyes. The Detective tries to focus on the Donut Man.

The Donut Man holds up a donut right in front of the Detective's face.

DONUT MAN
Life is a donut...

The Donut Man laughs uproariously.

Outside in the streets there are fires burning and electrical sparks in the air. Men, women and children and animals are running wild. Some are on fire.

Inside the diner a black coated man wades through a pile of bodies and stands in front of the man eating the soup. The black coat zaps the soup man and the soup man's arm flies back, hitting the Detective in the eye.

DETECTIVE
OWWW!

The Black coat moves quickly to zap some more people. The Detective's eye is watering and puffing up, but he sees a strange sight across the diner. Someone yells at the donut man that the donut man's shoes are untied. The donut man does not have a "normal" reaction to this. He screams bloody murder and runs wildly out of the diner. Just then a black coat turns and zaps the Detective right in the head with an electrical cattle prod gun. The Detective flips off his chair and lands next to Terry on the floor. The black coats leave as quickly as arrived.

TERRY
Did you see how dark it got? Do you understand... Light and dark... Light and dark?

DETECTIVE
TERRY!!...
(struggles to sit up)
... I almost bought it... I almost lost consciousness.

TERRY
Yeah a lotta them did here... look.

They look around and see many dead people around the diner.

DETECTIVE
When that guy's arm hit me it hurt so much... It made me able to concentrate otherwise. When I got zapped I woulda checked out.

TERRY
Hey wait a minute... same with me, only it was my sore that was killin' me. You're a pretty smart fella... this sore hurt like hell all the time... do you think its helpin me, by God?

DETECTIVE
Yeah... Terry! We gotta make some rigs to keep us in pain... you know... not always... but when we need it. Understand?

TERRY
Yeah!... that's a hellova idea...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Terry has found several things and he's showing them to the Detective.

TERRY
Look at these pin cushions I got from the knitters upstairs... stick the pins all the way through... Yeah... now stick it under your collar on the side or back of your neck.

Terry places the wad of pins inside the Detective's collar against his neck.

DETECTIVE
OWWWW... that hurts! Man is that painful!!...
(tears from his eyes from the pain)

TERRY
I'll get us some knitting needles too.

EXT. STREET - DEEP CITY - DUSK

Terry and the Detective are cautiously walking down a sidewalk.

TERRY
Now we're gettin' back in there. Don't look now but that's Ronald's parents' house...

DETECTIVE
It is??

TERRY
Yeah... we gotta start here... a lot of things begin to go wrong at home with the parents if you understand what I'm talkin about...

DETECTIVE
Yeah... but this is all memories?

TERRY

You'd play hell to tell the difference... oh oh!

Bill, the other man on the train with Terry is seen walking toward them on the other side of the street. Terry pulls the Detective with him behind a tree.

TERRY (CONT'D)
It's Bill... go ahead into Ronald's parents' house... get going... Bill would kill me if he saw me go in there. Go quick before he sees us! I'll find you, don't worry! Hurry! Don't leave the house!

The Detective hurries up the walkway to Ronald's parents' house and rings the bell. He looks around. Bill has seen him. Bill stands across the street grinning an evil grin at the Detective. The door is answered.

DETECTIVE
Hello...I've come to speak to you about... Are you the parents of Ronald De Arte'? Yes? I've come to speak to you about Ronald... Are you available for speaking?

The father is whittling a piece of wood.

MOTHER
Come in... we've changed the house... did you know it before?

DETECTIVE
No...

MOTHER
It now is the way it is... Sit down.

DETECTIVE
You haven't been in touch with Ronald for a long time.

FATHER
We've been here all along.

DETECTIVE
Yes, but there's been no correspondence?

MOTHER
No... He couldn't seem to stay out of trouble... It became difficult for us... his parents... and family who loved him so much.

DETECTIVE
I think he's in a great deal of trouble now.

MOTHER
He always was... A great deal of trouble...
(She has difficulty breathing...)

DETECTIVE
You are fond memories of his... I'm sure...

FATHER
Oh yes? How does he remember me like this?
(he makes a strange smiling face)

MOTHER
And me like this?
(she makes the same strange smiling face)

They laugh with each other.

FATHER
I'm sure he's in trouble... we haven't heard from him in ages...

MOTHER
I'm sorry, did we offer you some coffee?

Suddenly the Detective sees some electrical sparks shoot out of a socket... It is instantly later and coffee is being poured.

MOTHER
Some sweets?

DETECTIVE
Thank you...
(he takes some chocolate)

FATHER
So.... you are a detective?

DETECTIVE
Yes I am.

Suddenly the father has frozen with paralyzed nerves and fallen head first into the rug. He remains with his bottom up in the air still resting on the chair while his forehead carries the weight of his body pressed against the rug. Paralyzed.

MOTHER
(nervous)
Oh, he's gone off again. Give me a hand would you?

DETECTIVE
Surely...

MOTHER
Daddy... Daddy, it's all right. It's all right.

FATHER
Yes... my God... Gone off again.

MOTHER
Yes you did Daddy... It's the excitement... take a drink of your coffee let me pat your forehead... is that better... let me rub your neck there and there... is that better... do you like that.

FATHER
(extremely irritated with the mother)
OK, OK, that's enough...

MOTHER
(very defensive suddenly)
Oh, I'm sorry.

FATHER
(trying to stop the inevitable fight)
No, no thank you. It's better now...

MOTHER
(still at him)
Oh, so, I did do something good, huh... Did I?

FATHER
Yes. Sure, you did.

MOTHER
Yes... I saw how much you enjoyed it.

Now in comes the daughter, Celia.

CELIA
Who's this?

MOTHER
This is a detective... I suppose looking into Ronald's life... What led him to ruin... such a sweet lad...

CELIA
(to detective)
You can just come into homes and lives and all like that?

DETECTIVE
Yes... I guess so.

FATHER
(to detective)
I've lost my job...

MOTHER
(amazed)
He hasn't been able to discuss it with anyone, have you?

FATHER
(very angry at her)
No I haven't... I'm speaking to him!!

MOTHER
I just meant it's nice that you can talk about it now, isn't it?

FATHER
(to detective)
Everything's gone to hell.

CELIA
(to detective)
You like music?

DETECTIVE
Some music...

CELIA
You wanta listen to records? I have a record player in my room.

FATHER
What's wrong with the victrola right here young lady?

MOTHER
Oh, let her show him her room... It's nice to have someone drop by, isn't it sweet?

FATHER
What the hell's wrong with this victrola right here?

CELIA
Come up... they don't like my records anyway.

She takes the Detective to the stairs and starts up. The father follows and grabs the Detective by the wrist.

FATHER
(under his breath)
To her room heh? For records? Give it a rest...

CELIA
Dad!

FATHER
Just what in the hell is wrong with that Victrola right there...

CELIA
He's coming up to my room to listen to records...

MOTHER
Honey, let them go... I think it's nice...

CELIA
See Dad?

FATHER
(under breath again)
I see... I see...
(close to Detective's ear)
What did you walk into heh?
(he squeezes the Detective's wrist really hard)
(now he speaks loudly)
Why don't you just get the hell out!!

CELIA
Mom... I wanta talk to you about something.

FATHER
OK!!! Go on up... listen to that puke... that's what it is too, all of it... It's all junk now... ruined... forever!!!! You call that music! It's pitiful!!!

The sister brings the Detective into her room and shuts the door. She goes to the phonograph and starts a swing record. Organ playing - very faint, very scratchy. She starts to sway with the music- her head, her shoulders. She looks to the Detective. He is swinging, too. She stands up and bares her breasts to the Detective.

CELIA
They hurt so touch them easy.

The father is mounting the stairs. He comes down the hall and listens at his daughter's door.

Inside the Detective is kissing Celia who has now removed her blouse.

FATHER
(yelling through the door)
You call that music?

CELIA
Oh shut up –
(she scratches the needle across the record - the music stops...)
Just shut up.

FATHER
(yelling)
Ronnie used to sing... He really did... He knew a damn good song... Come out and mother and I will sing it to you.

Celia is reaching for and opening a jar of medicated salve or ointment. She opens the jar and indicates to the Detective to get some ointment and rub it on her breasts. The lid makes some noise as she turns it closed on the jar. The father hears it.

FATHER
(now screaming)
Is that your ointment!! Is it? Stop it!! Stop it!! Is it? I heard it.

CELIA
I'll sing the song!
(as her breasts are being rubbed and her eyes close in ecstasy... she sings a beautiful love song... very pure, very beautiful.)

FATHER
Stop it... You're not going to sing his song in there with him!!

The mother climbs the stairs.

MOTHER
Is that Ronald's song I hear? Is it?

FATHER
Yes!...

He begins pounding violently on the door--frantically.

FATHER (CONT'D)
Come out of there. Come out of there... I mean it. I'll call the police! I'm going to get them now... they'll be here any minute!

The father rushes downstairs... past the mother who stands, confused.

CELIA
(to detective)
He won't call them... he's all talk... come closer to me... touch me
(as he does)
don't do it that way!
(he changes ways)
OK... that's better... I have to move a little because I can't stand still like you do...
(she starts swaying quite quickly back and forth)
Can't you kiss me?... yes there... wait! Don't push in like that though...

The Detective tries once more to kiss Celia but she stops him again.

CELIA
Can I lean a little bit? I have an ear ache and I can't put my head back like that... It hurts... hold my waist so I can lean over OK?...

The Detective is now holding her up as she is leaning way over to her right, her long hair almost touching the floor.

CELIA (CONT'D)
Let me lean over more... Now you can feel me... don't let go with that hand... use the other one.

He starts feeling her breasts with his right hand, while he holds her up with his left.

CELIA (CONT'D)
... a little bit less... they hurt... I told you that!!... I have to move my

feet... move your feet over some, OK?... yeah.

There are noises of steps outside the door. Several people.

CELIA (CONT'D)
Do you like police?

The Detective turns frantically to look at the door.

DETECTIVE
Well... maybe not right now.

CELIA
(smiling)
No?

DETECTIVE
(nervous)
No... not so much right now... Is there another way out of here.

CELIA
(as she stands up)
Go upstairs... through the door. Ask the nurse to let you out the back.

DETECTIVE
The nurse?

CELIA
My grandfather's up there... he's real sick--hurry up.

There is loud banging on the door.

FATHER
(yelling through the door)
Open up... I have the police!!

CELIA
Come on Dad... we're not doing anything.

She hurries the Detective up the back stairs. As he climbs the stairs he can still hear the father yelling and Celia yelling back.

CELIA

Send them away or I'll tell them what you do to me... I will!

The Detective enters a small room. A nurse stands next to a bed where an old man lies. The nurse turns and studies the Detective.

DETECTIVE
She said you'd let me out the back door.

NURSE
(very calmly)
You'll have to get a saw and some lumber and make one then because there sure isn't a back door up here.

DETECTIVE
(looking around frantically)
Oh yeah?

OLD MAN
I'm awfully sick... Did you know that?... and then guess what?

DETECTIVE
What's that?

OLD MAN
(starting to cry)
Someone must have snuck in here last night and glued my arms to the bed... the bastards... Can't move em' now... stuck down...

NURSE
(whispering to Detective)
He's paralyzed... What about it? He won't care... and what can he do if he does? Do you want to kiss me? ... real hot?

DETECTIVE
I gotta get out of this house...

NURSE
Look at this...

She shows the Detective one of her breasts.

DETECTIVE
(as he studies it)
... but... I really have to go...really.

NURSE
All right then...

She puts her breast away.

OLD MAN
Hey... let me see... let me see... Oh my God!

The Detective crawls out the window and looks around. He sees another building within jumping distance. He hurries across the roof and leaps to a small balcony of the neighboring building. He crosses the balcony and goes through a very dark room to an interior hallway, high in the old building. Suddenly a policeman appears climbing a staircase. The policeman grabs the Detective and pulls him along the corridor.

POLICEMAN
Almost!!... you almost got away... but how would he like to remember this?

The policeman shoves the Detective's head into a room where a small boy is hit in the back of the head with a rock.

POLICEMAN
Or this?

He shoves the Detective into another room where a bird with a broken neck is doing backward sommersaults.

POLICEMAN
Or this?

He shows the Detective the next room. In it he sees a stairway as if coming down from above. Slowly someone is descending the stairs but all he sees are the feet... coming down--closer... frighteningly close.

POLICEMAN
Or this?

He shows the Detective the next room. In it the Detective can see the shape of a woman. He looks closer. He sees two breasts as screams are heard echoing horribly in the distance.

Suddenly there is a spark shooting out of a wall socket in the corridor. The Detective notices then looks up. The policeman is gone. Then, above the Detective hears a loud screeching sound as the light is drained from the overhead bulb. The Detective moves slowly to the end of the corridor and starts climbing some stairs.

He climbs higher and higher. Each flight of stairs looks the same. Finally, he stops to rest. Just as he does, he hears something. A moaning distant wind. Then suddenly some music, "Reminds Me of You." A door opens above and a beautiful girl appears. The Detective cautiously goes to her.

GIRL
Hello...

DETECTIVE
Hello...

GIRL
Who are you?

DETECTIVE
I'm ... a Detective... Who are you?

GIRL
Don't you know?

DETECTIVE
No...

DIANA
I'm... well... I'm Diana.

DETECTIVE
You are? You're beautiful...

DIANA
Do you think so?

DETECTIVE
Yes...

DIANA

We're all going to the club tonight.

DETECTIVE
Yes? What club is that?

DIANA
It's called the Circle Club. I'm putting on my make-up.

DETECTIVE
Oh yeah?

DIANA
Do you want to come in?

DETECTIVE
Yes... sure... if it's all right.

DIANA
Come in.

She takes the Detective inside. He sits in an easy chair while she sits at her make-up table and starts getting ready to go out.

Suddenly the wall begins to shake very quietly... It begins to strain, the light on Diana's make-up table strains and dims... the light explodes as two sections of the wall blow out... electric wires bend into the room and begin to jump and flip like hissing snakes shooting out electrical sparks. The room darkens to a haunting feeling, Diana rubs a long line of lipstick up her face- up her nose, eye, forehead and into her hair before she flips backwards out of her chair onto the floor next to the Detective's chair. The Detective is pushing a pin cushion into his neck and blood is forming in little dots. Both their eyes are wild. The Detective strains and pushes a knitting needle into Diana's leg. Her eyes focus on she reaches out for him. The electrical violence reaches a fever pitch then begins to subside. The ceiling light glows a bit brighter. Diana and the Detective slowly come out of their fits and find they are looking into each other’s eyes. As she looks dreamily at the Detective.

DIANA
You put a knitting needle into my leg.

DETECTIVE
Yes.

DIANA
But why?

DETECTIVE
So you wouldn't lose consciousness. If I hadn't you... you would have died.

DIANA
I felt it save me... may I touch your face?

DETECTIVE
Yes....

DIANA
May I touch your lips?

DETECTIVE
Yes.

DIANA
With my lips?

DETECTIVE
Yes.

They kiss.

DIANA
I want to be with you always...

DETECTIVE
And I want to always be with you...

DIANA
It's a dream... Yes... is it?

DETECTIVE
It must be.

DIANA
Why?

DETECTIVE
When I kissed you I saw fire...
(we now see what he talks about--a wall of fire)

and I saw that three of my fingers were on fire...

(we see three burning fingers)

and I saw three explosions of light in the sky and streamers falling down

(we see this)

and I saw three people who couldn't walk.

(we see them)

DIANA

You did?

Suddenly a friendly large woman, THE AUNT, enters hurriedly.

THE AUNT

Aren't you coming Diana? Oh my dear you look a dreadful sight... whatever happened?

DIANA

I would like you to meet my friend... he's a Detective... He saved my life...

THE AUNT

Oh my Lord. Are you two all right? Thank heavens. Oh... he's a handsome one...

DIANA

Yes he is... this is my aunt... didn't anything happen in other parts of the house?

THE AUNT

No dear... the lights dimmed... we all had a jump... nothing more. Is that a knitting needle in your leg darling?

DIANA

Yes it is. It save my life.

THE AUNT

Oh it did? Oh my. Thank heavens... hurry along, we're late for the club. Your pretty face is quite a mess honey... really it is.

(she leaves)

DIANA
(with her very messy face, she turns to the Detective)
Would you take me to the dance tonight?

DETECTIVE
Yes... absolutely yes...

DIANA
Do you think it's safe?

DETECTIVE
I have a feeling we can do anything... as long as we're together.

Outside Bill is standing in some bushes looking up at Diana's house.

The Detective and Diana walk arm in arm down the sidewalk along with Diana's uncles and aunts and friends--a group of at least fifteen very dashingly and beautifully dressed people. They arrive at a striking entrance to the "circle club." It is a gigantic white neon circle glowing against the black night sky. Underneath it is a smaller glowing circle and passing through it one enters the "circle club." The Detective and Diana look up at the big circle. The Detective is struck by the power of the image and tries to figure something out inside his head. He shrugs off the thoughts and happily enters the club with all the others.

Inside the night club, which is very elegant in a 30's sort of way, a maitre'd seats the large party at a big round table near the center of the vast room. The place is crowded with fancy People. The Detective and Diana are so in love. "I think we've discovered a pair of love birds, don't you?" someone says. "I think they make a darling couple." "It's a perfect match."

INT. DEBORAH'S APT. - NIGHT

This is a cozy setting. Bob, Dan, Deborah and Ronnie are all sitting happily together in Deborah's livingroom.

DEBORAH
Ronnie you are such a love... and how hard you study on your homework?

Ronnie's page, however, is blank except for tiny scribbles of the symbols he showed the Detective in the hospital. We move into a CU of Ronnie.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - DEEP CITY - NIGHT

DETECTIVE
I'm wild about love.

DIANA
Me too.

DETECTIVE
How can life be so dreamy?

DIANA
I know.

Drinks are served--large bottles of champagne. All sorts of little hors d'oeuvres are brought out. The party is getting happier and happier. An old gentleman proposes a toast.

OLD GENTLEMAN
To love!

Everyone "to love." They drink. The Detective asks Diana if she would like to dance. The music is by a large orchestra playing a 30's style waltz. Very beautiful. The Detective and the girl hold each other tightly as they sway to the music.

A large group of people enter the Club. They are all smiling as they look around at all the other happy smiling people.

MAN IN CROWD
(smiling)
Gee this is a happy place!!

As they dance the Detective notices that the light coming from one of the table lamps is decreasing in intensity. He holds Diana tighter. He tries not to think about it but it worries him.

At the table the old gentleman who gave the toast is reminiscing. A few people are half listening to him as they watch the dancing.

OLD GENTLEMEN
(smiling in his reverie)

I had a girl like her once... I was in love... her lips were red like this one's are... her eyes were bright I wanted to touch her and kiss her all the time. My love was so intense!! No one could love that way... so strongly.

The Detective looks over to the bad lamp. It is now flickering and getting darker. He hears the light being sucked out of it. It goes out. The Detective looks quickly around. All the other lights are still going.

Back at the table the talk of the old gentleman changes.

OLD GENTLEMAN
However... in this world love like that doesn't last... it withers like the vine... it vanishes like the snow. It drys up like the leaves... it changes...

The Detective notices another light flickering... and another. A low ominous wind comes now along with the beautiful music.

The old gentleman is now getting a bit upset with his memory of love. There is some growing anger and tension at the table.

OLD GENTLEMEN
... The love almost rots... it becomes rancid, sour, foul smelling... it putriefies the atmosphere... It degenerates into loathing... I hated that girl... let me tell you she was a whore of the first order... a filthy whore... unclean.

The Detective sees six more small lights flickering. They screech as they go out. Others begin to notice. There's a growing uneasiness in the room.

At the table the old gentleman is enraged with his memory. He is almost foaming at the mouth with hatred and anger.

OLD GENTLEMEN
... I despised everything she ever thought or said or did... She was like a plague, festering and bubbling, coughing up foul horror and sickness, the kind

that makes a man plead to die... just to end the trial, just to be left alone... to be rid of everything... longing for unconsciousness.

The Detective is dancing very close with Diana. His eyes are closed. He opens them and moves to look into her eyes. They are in love, but there is trouble in this circle club. She sees him looking about, worrying.

DIANA
What is it?

DETECTIVE
I don't know... something's wrong here...

He suddenly sees Bill entering.

DETECTIVE
Oh no... Bill!... I think something is definitely wrong... I think the trucks are coming.

DIANA
Oh no!

Light slowly starts to drain from the big light above the dance floor. There is a slow screeching, sucking sound with the decreasing light.

Now the kitchen doors fly open. The cook stands trembling and screaming.

COOK
All my animals!! Bleeding from the mouth... All my animals... going wild!! My PIG!!

Suddenly a small screaming pig rushes into the club, zig-zagging all around, crazily. The cook screaming and running after it. Everyone in the club is now tense, standing, looking around, worried. The orchestra plays but musicians are missing notes and not following the score. The Detective and Diana cling to each other. The bleeding pig races past them.

OLD WOMAN
Oh my!! A pig is loose. Oh my!!

OLD GENTLEMAN
It's bleeding from the mouth! Look at the blood!!

Out in the street two giant trucks are coming toward the "circle club." Each truck shooting electrical sparks high into the air. The sound is deafening.

Inside the club the pig races into another crowd. More screams. Then a loud gunshot.

MAN #1
I shot a pig!! I shot a pig. Why did I do that?

The lights are all flickering now, giving the place a strange nervous feeling. Sucking and screeching sounds getting louder and more frequent. Musicians playing horribly--erratic--nervous.

The cook rushes up to the man who shot his pig.

COOK
My God!!... You shot my Pig...

He tries to kill the pigshooter with his bare hands. People hold him back.

Suddenly a tall man with a beard, a pipe, and a black and red checkered lumber jacket pushes his way through the crowd to the dead pig. With a booming voice he speaks.

LUMBER MAN
I can throw that pig.

COOK
Don't throw my pig!

PIG SHOOTER
It's dead... whatdyou care?

COOK
Don't throw it!!

LUMBER MAN
I can throw that pig farther than anyone can... By God I know I can...

MAN IN CROWD
I'll bet you can't throw that pig clear across the room!!

LUMBER MAN
Watch me! MOVE BACK!!
(calling out very loud)
Watch out... I'M GOING TO THROW A PIG OVER THERE!

People begin frantically clearing away from the line of flight.

COOK
(holding his head between his hands)
Leave it alone!! That was a damn good pig too... now look at it!!

The Lumber Man grabs the pig by the hind legs and like a chain ball he starts twirling himself and the pig... faster and faster. People scream and move back. The Lumber Man twirls faster. Everyone is watching him now.

Bill moves closer to the Detective. The Detective has been watching the pig but has kept an eye on Bill too. Bill is smiling in an evil way. The Detective holds Diana closer.

Outside the big trucks round the corner. People are screaming - sparks shoot crazily. Some people burst into flames. Others bounce or gyrate.

Inside the Lumber Man twirls violently with the pig one more revolution then with tremendous force releases it. The pig flys wildly through the air, across the night club and crashes into the far wall, bounces back with a squeak onto a table crushing it to the floor. The sounds of the truck are now heard inside the Club. All begin to go wild.

LUMBER MAN
I KNEW I could! I told you all!

DETECTIVE
(to Diana)
Take these... here it comes!!

He jabs a knitting needle into each of her legs then he does the same to himself. He puts a pin cushion inside his collar and forces

the pins into his skin. The big light screeches like hell then blows all over the room. Other lights pulsate violently. A horse and two cows, all bleeding heavily from the mouth come out of the kitchen. The horse whinnies horribly. Their eyes are wild.

The horrible sound of buzzing, hissing, humming, electricity is heard. Wall sockets spurt electrical sparks. As the room gets darker and the people start to get confused. Absurdity runs rampant. People try to eat their hands or feet. They crawl on or under the tables. Their tongues get tied and they can't speak. Some more small table lamps begin to blow out.

"Ill bet you I can spit!" says one man. Out comes his tongue but no spit. The Lumber Man's pipe starts spewing smoke in huge clouds. "Let's jump off a table!" yells someone in a rage.

The Donut Man appears on the stage. The Detective is trying to turn himself in a circle while he is standing on his head. His girl, Diana, is in a fetal position as if she is trying desperately to propell herself through water. Her tongue is cut and pressed against her cheek. People are running furiously for unknown destinations. The orchestra is totally confused and is playing very abstract sound arrangements. Some musicians even destroying their instruments in the process. The drummer is playing very complicated jazz timings and the audience is beginning to shake and gyrate in robot like movements. The music becomes more and more abstract sounding like a syncopated barnyard button factory. All the while it's getting darker and darker. Then the Black Coats enter. They begin to violently zap people while the Donut Man stands in front of the orchestra smiling and eating donuts. His eyes bug out with sadistic happiness.

The black coats try to zap the Detective and Diana but they are clinging to each other and it is at this point that they realize that their love is protecting them. They yell at the Black Coats.

DIANA
You can't hurt us because we love each other so much.

DETECTTVE
She's right.

BLACK COAT
But we can separate you.

They grab Diana and pull her away from the Detective.

BLACK COAT (CONT'D)
(to Detective)
Can you say "separate"?

The Detective watches in horror as they drag her away. She is screaming desperately.

DETECTIVE
(hardly able to talk)
Come back...

Their eyes watch each other until Diana disappears in the darkness. SPARKS! All is death... bodies barely move. Bill stands against a far wall staring at the Detective. The orchestra is almost silent--only the barest most abstract arrangement now--very low--very strange. Suddenly in this darkness a man enters. The Detective is so far gone he cannot see him clearly. The man walks silently through the bodies but, with his back to the Detective. The man extends his arms toward the far wall. Bolts of dark electricity issue from his finger tips and shoot into the dead pig. Now a horrible thing... the dead pig comes to life and stands up like a human. It's hind legs growing longer, the pigs stands in the darkness, in front of the unknown man and along with the very low strange music. The pigs says, "Life is a donut." Then issues a horrifying laugh. The man and the pig both laugh then. The unknown man moves his hand up and down. The pig speaks again.

PIG
(slowly and strangely)
I know a man who is afraid of dogs.

The donut man laughs. Bill laughs. The Detective watches in horror, his mind trying, straining to cling to consciousness. Outside the trucks have just passed. The streets are quiet. The "circle club" sign is barely lit but it is visible. Terry runs quickly down the street toward the "circle club."

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN CITY - DAY

CU Ronnie. He is sitting in a classroom in high school. The room is very dirty and drab. Soot clouds go by and smoke stacks blow out smoke and everything is dingy. The blackboard is filthy with coal dust and the white chalk looks dark grey. The teacher is an old man with wild hair and glasses. With a long pointer in his hand he is pointing to a detailed drawing of a dog with stars and

swirling lines around it as if it may be some constellation in space.

TEACHER
Can anyone show us the equation for the time involved here?

No one raises his hand. Ronnie is sitting in a desk by the wall. His acne has gotten even worse and together with his red hair he is quite a sight. He is still wearing his chest apparatus and still needs a plug-in every fifteen minutes. The little warning sound is going and he is just rising to go with his plug to the wall when the teacher spots him.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
All right, Ronnie, step to the blackboard and write out the equation.
(Ronnie doesn't move)
Step to the board and write out the equation.

Ronnie goes to the board and stands there. Finally the teacher goes and puts a piece of chalk in his hand. Ronnie puts his nose right next to the blackboard and very carefully draws a very small symbol like the ones in the hospital.

STUDENT
Not again.

Even before Ronnie finishes the second symbol the teacher is asking for another student.

TEACHER
Can anyone write out the proper equation? Jane?

JANE
All right...

Jane is a very beautiful girl who is stacked. She is dressed in a tight white sweater and a black tight skirt. She has blonde bee-hived hair. She goes to the board and begins to write out her answers. Meanwhile, Ronnie is still working on his symbols. Some guys and the teacher are looking at Jane's beautiful body. Suddenly, the bell rings and Ronnie's head flies back violently and his mouth opens wide. School is over for the day. All the students leave the room, bumping into Ronnie who is going to his

desk to get his books. On the way out he and the teacher stare at each other. Ronnie is in sort of a trance, running low on electricity.

TEACHER
School's out for the day... Ronnie!

Ronnie leaves the room. The hall is practically empty. The clock says 3:30. Ronnie grabs hold of his plug and as he walks down the hall he looks from side to side for an outlet. There are none in the hall. He comes to come steps leading down to the basement and he follows them down--looking for an outlet. Finding no outlets on the steps, he pushes the basement doors open and enters a large room where a rock and roll band is setting up to rehearse. They are getting equipment together and tuning up as Ronnie enters. The musicians are factory greaser types dressed in black suits. The band is not big time but they do have managers. The main manager is a fat man who is mean and powerful. His name is MR. BARKO, and his associate is MR. GREEN. Ronnie goes to the opposite end of the room and plugs in, minding his own business. There are a few other kids in the room waiting to hear the band play.

MR. BARKO
(to the band)
You guys are late setting up for rehearsals again. I'm SICK of this. We're not going to win any record deal tomorrow night if you guys don't get to work. I'll pull my money out quick... I'll break a few arms, too... we don't want to manage a bunch of losers.

MR. GREEN
(under his breath to Barko)
We may not want to but I think we are.

MR. BARKO
Hey, Johnny, let's go!

JOHNNY
Sorry, Mr. Barko, but we got a lot of equipment to set up. We're almost ready.

Johnny plugs in some big amplifiers and microphones. All the equipment has a very foreign look to it. It is equipment that is very strange looking, the microphones are very large... the amps and speakers and equipment are all jet black and very strangely

designed like a cross between 1920's electrical and a gloss black Porche speedster. The band is ready and they warm up by playing about fifteen seconds of very cool music, then Johnny stops and takes a long cord and finding no other place to plug it in, goes over to where Ronnie is sitting to use his outlet. He and Ronnie look at each other as Johnny plugs in his cord right above Ronnie's. Johnny is carrying his electric guitar and in order to test the new change he turns his guitar on and begins to play. SUDDENLY out of Ronnie's mouth comes a very strange loud musical sound. The sound scares Johnny. Ronnie then lets out another strange sound, a musical scream and one of the band's speakers begins to vibrate and it blows out. Ronnie begins to make some new strange sounds, sounds he has never made before and he begins to twitch in a rhythm and for a short while something begins to happen but Ronnie pulls his cord out and stops. The entire Band is staring at Ronnie.

Outside Dan and Bob pull up to the high school and wait for Ronnie.

Back inside, Johnny is still staring in disbelief at Ronnie.

MR. BARKO
What happened? Let's get to work... leave that kid alone. What's going on here?

JOHNNY
Wait a minute ... we could use this kid. I've never seen or heard anything like him. We could use this kid, Mr. Barko.

MR. BARKO
(Thinking, then looking at Mr. Green, eyebrows go up, then, turning to Ronnie, squinting at him)
What's your name?

Ronnie is silent.

MR. BARKO (CONT'D)
Hey, kid... what's your name?

They walk towards him. Ronnie remains silent.

MR. BARKO (CONT'D)
Johnny, take him over and see what he can do.

JOHNNY
Come here kid.

Johnny takes Ronnie over to the rest of the band up on the stage and puts him in front of a microphone. When everyone is set he puts Ronnie in. Instantly, he screams but he and the music cause the scream to be beautiful and then he twitches and moves in rhythm with the drummer. Ronnie begins to make strange sounds which work together with the music. Some more students hurry into the room drawn by the music. The managers hurry into the room drawn by the music. The managers notice this. The kids are staring in disbelief at Ronnie. Johnny signs a few lines and Ronnie mimicks him in a very strangely cool way. Ronnie starts to vibrate and he turns around and all the instruments change together going way up then down. Ronnie looks great in front of the microphone and this rock and roll is totally crazy and heavy and the students who are witnessing it are spellbound. The band is really going.

The song ends, the people break into applause. Ronnie is gripping the microphone. As the applause dies down someone yells out "What's your name?" The others begin to ask. As the applause is almost gone, there is a short space of silence coming up into which Ronnie inserts:

RONNIE
Ronnie Rocket.

People begin to say his name out loud, as they burst into applause again. Ronnie tries to pull his plug but Johnny has to help him. When Ronnie finally gets unplugged he starts walking backwards in a circle and finally falls down and sort of collapses. There are a few screams by some girls and lots of murmurings. Mr. Barko and Mr. Green hold the kids back as they try to get up close to Ronnie to see if he is all right. Just then, Dan and Bob enter and look around. They are about to turn and go when they hear someone mention Ronnie Rocket. They go into the room. Finally they see him and rush to him.

DAN
What happened, Ronnie?
(to others around)
What happened to him?

JOHNNY
He was playing some music with us and guess it got him tired or something?

MR. BARKO
Are you the kid's father or what?

DAN
Yeah, come on, Bob, let's get him home.

Dan picks up Ronnie and carries him out of the room.

MR. BARKO
(to the band)
You guys keep rehearsing, we'll be right back.
(he winks at them)

JOHNNY
Get that kid!

Mr. Barko and Mr. Green catch up to Dan, Bob and Ronnie by their car. The Doctors, Dan and Bob stare at Mr. Barko and Mr. Green.

MR. BARKO
We're very interested in your boy there.

DAN
Why, what did he do?

BOB
(he and Dan defensive)
What is it?

MR. BARKO
(chewing a cigar)
Hey, wait a minute, he didn't do anything except make great music. Your kid's got something. We think he could be big. I mean, your kid's got something. We want to make a deal, together we can make more money than you ever dreamed of. Are you his father?

DAN
(looks quickly at Bob)
Yeah, Bob's my partner. What's the deal?

Ronnie is feeling much better and during Mr. Barko's talk, he has wandered out onto the ground in front of the school. As the deal is being made, Ronnie wanders around. He looks up to a window in

the school and sees a boy and a girl. They are talking, then she pushes him, he pushes her. Then we see Mr. Barko and Mr. Green from a distance talking with Dan and Bob. Then Ronnie's acne covered face looking up at the window. The boy and girl come together in a long tender kiss. Ronnie watches them. Then Ronnie turns and sees Mr. Barko and Mr. Green shaking hands with Dan and Bob.

Then from a distance we see Ronnie standing alone turning in a small circle.

Later, at Deborah's apartment. Ronnie is sitting at the dinner table with Deborah, Dan, and Bob, but he is at the other end by himself while the others talk.

BOB
Yes, and he starts tomorrow night. There's some contest. we should have enough money to get all new equipment and everything.

DEBORAH
Was anything wrong with my money?

DAN
No, no, Deborah.

DEBORAH
What if they find out about you and Ronnie? You must stop and think. I'll give you more money if this is what you need. I never knew you needed more money.

DAN
They won't find out. They'll never know and it's so much money, Deborah. We could almost build our own hospital or become famous someday. We could do surgery everyday. Bob, we could do surgery every day!!!

BOB
My God!!

DEBORAH
Maybe this will mean you'll go away from me.

DAN
No!

BOB
No!

DEBORAH
Maybe you will be so famous you will not need me any longer. This can happen.

BOB
No.

DAN
No, Deborah.

DEBORAH
Maybe you will not need my caresses, someone else's maybe?

DAN
No.

BOB
No, never.

DEBORAH
Maybe you will not need...

Deborah breaks down crying. Bob and Dan go to her. They get on their knees and caress her. Bob kisses her neck and Dan holds her hand and kisses up her arm passionately. Ronnie sits at the other end of the table watching.

DAN
We'll never leave you, Deborah.

BOB
Deborah, Deborah, please stop crying, stop crying.

DEBORAH
(she calms down, Bob and Dan remain close to her)
You see how I care so much for you two? I'm crying my heart out.

(she clutches her chest)
I'm crying for you to be famous surgeons... two of the most gifted doctors... you should be famous. I'm crying because this is the way I believe, that I don't want to have things change so much. I want things the way they are forever. I'm so happy with my Bobby and Dan, and our little Ronnie. I'm so happy.

DAN
Things will still be happy.

DEBORAH
Promise me.

DAN
I promise.

BOB
I promise, too!

DEBORAH
(whispering)
Dan, I want you to take my blouse off.

Bob goes and takes Ronnie to the livingroom. Dan removes Deborah's blouse.

DEBORAH (CONT'D)
Thank you, Dan, and now my shoes. And remember how I believe... the night is long... the way I believe is go slowly. It is very dark... and time is so big.

She begins to rub her breasts in front of Bob while Dan removes her stockings.

Ronnie is in the livingroom. He is staring off into the ceiling. His eyes are following some unseen object around and around and around.

Friday night. Outside the factories blow howling smoke. At the school dance, the room is crowded. Deborah, Dan and Bob are in the audience, strange looking teenagers all around. The high school principal is there and Ronnie's teacher, even the stern little lady receptionist.

Behind stage the band is almost ready to go. Mr. Barko is off stage chewing a big cigar. Johnny is setting Ronnie up by the microphone.

JOHNNY
(to Ronnie)
You okay?...
(no answer)
You're okay. Just stand there and then when the curtain, up here
(he points)
when it opens, I'll plug you in and we'll, go. Just do what you do.

RONNIE
Weeeeel go.

JOHNNY
That's right, kid. We'll really go.

Johnny looks to the other members of the band to see if they're ready, the nod that they are. Johnny signals Mr. Barko. Mr. Barko goes to the Master of Ceremonies.

MR. BARKO
(to M.C.)
Okay, they're ready now... and remember introduce them as Ronnie Rocket.

M.C.
All right, fine Mr. Barko.

From behind the curtain Ronnie hears the M.C.

M.C. (CONT'D)
Ladies and gentlemen... the last band to perform tonight in the contest is now ready. Ladies and gentlemen... RONNIE ROCKET.

As the curtains open there is applause but it soon stops. Ronnie isn't on the stage and the rest of the band stands embarrassed in the uncomfortable silence. The curtain closes. Backstage Mr. Barko is furious. He sees Bob walking Ronnie by the hand towards him and the stage.

BOB

Can I help it if he had to go to the bathroom?

MR. BARKO
Hurry up and get him back on that stage!

Ronnie now high steps across the stage. The M.C. can be heard re-introducing Ronnie Rocket. Johnny turns up all the power he can. There is a loud hissing sound coming from all the speakers. The curtain opens just as Ronnie high steps into place in front of the microphone.

The curtains open very slowly. Ronnie locks himself in front of the microphone... hands gripping it and knees bent... ready to go. Johnny plugs Ronnie in. He begins to vibrate like crazy. He screams out and the music begins. The music is pounding and powerful. The audience is loving it. Ronnie falls to one knee and Dan and Bob look at each other with worry in their eyes. Suddenly, sparks come from Ronnie's mouth and the music gets wilder. Ronnie shakes violently. Ronnie starts to gag and the lights go way low. He shakes in rhythm with the drummer. When Johnny sings, Ronnie tries to mimick him. His eyes bug but. The kids are watching Ronnie... dumbfounded. The ones that started to dance have stopped and are watching. Ronnie gags more sparks then whines. The guitar starts to whine, the organ whines. Ronnie falls to the floor gagging and jerking. Dan holds Bob back from helping him because he wants to see if Ronnie can make it through alone. Ronnie starts mimicking Johnny's echo reverbing rock and roll voice then starts to scream out. This causes some electrical disturbances. Electricity seems to go through the air between Ronnie and the instruments. The sounds jump accordingly. Finally sounds are at a fever pitch and Johnny decides that he should end the song. Ronnie is gagging pretty badly and is on the floor. Johnny pulls Ronnie's plug.

RONNIE
(yelling)
Ronnie Rocket!

Just after the music stops and the lights come up, the applause is thunderous and Ronnie passes out. The curtain closes. Johnny and Fred (the bass player) pick Ronnie up and carry him backstage. Dan and Bob and Deborah are very upset.

DAN
(to Bob)
Go get your bag and I'll meet you backstage.

(to Deborah)
Come with me.

BOB
I'll go fast.
(to himself as he goes through the crowd)
I'll go fast... I'll go fast.

Dan and Deborah run backstage where things are in somewhat of a turmoil. Dan spots Mr. Green.

DAN
(excited)
Where's Ronnie?

MR. GREEN
He's in there.

Mr. Green points to a door marked "Private" down a hallway. Dan and Deborah hurry to the door and both of them begin knocking on it. No one answers but they hear moans and sounds within. The door is locked.

DAN
OPEN UP!! OPEN UP!!!
(to Deborah)
Go get Mr. Green or Mr. Barko to open this door.

DEBORAH
All right.

She goes hurrying off back down the hall. Bob comes running in the other way and Deborah points toward Dan. Bob hurries down to join Dan in front of the locked door. Bob's shoulders are going way up and down as he breathes heavily.

BOB
(out of breath)
What's wrong?

DAN
The door's locked. Ronnie's in there. Deborah went for...

Just then the door opens. It's a nurse answering the knock.

NURSE
Yes?

DAN
I'm Ronnie's father. Where is he?

He and Bob go through the door.

NURSE
Wait a minute.

BOB
You wait a minute.

In the next room they see a doctor with Ronnie. The doctor is fooling around with Ronnie's appliance and Ronnie is jumping and sparking and the doctor is getting electrical shocks every few seconds and yelling out. Dan and Bob move the nurse aside and rush toward Ronnie. The doctor looks up and suddenly Bob and Dan freeze just as they were about to enter the room. They recognize this doctor and he recognizes them.

DOCTOR
Pink and Platinum... what are you guys doin' here?

NURSE
(hurrying forward)
It's Ronnie's father.

The doctor gasps as he realizes why Ronnie is the way he is, he looks aghast at Ronnie then up to Bob and Dan. Then his astonishment turns to anger.

DOCTOR
Ronnie's father, my big butt!! Wait 'till Mr. Barko hears about this!

Bob and Dan look at each other.

DAN
You take the nurse...

Bob begins chasing the nurse and Dan leaps on the doctor hitting him hard.

Meanwhile, Deborah has found Mr. Barko talking with the M.C.

DEBORAH
Please, Mr. Barko, they won't open the door. We have to see our Ronnie.

MR. BARKO
He's with my doctor don't worry.
(turns away again)

DEBORAH
Please!!!... we must be with him now.

MR. BARKO
All right.
(to M.C.)
I'll be right back... if anything breaks in the meantime I'll be in the office... let me know.

M.C.
Right, Mr. Barko.

Together Deborah and Mr. Barko go off to the room.

When they open the door and enter, Deborah screams. The nurse is taped up to a filing cabinet just inside the door. Her eyes are wild; her mouth is taped shut. Bob is administering drugs, etc. to Ronnie on the cot in the next room. Dan has the doctor held in his lap with his belt running-through the doctor's mouth causing the doctor's head to bend back at a very uncomfortable angle. The doctor begins to make gurgling sounds when he sees Mr. Barko. The doctor's eyes are also wild. Deborah covers her mouth with both her hands.

MR. BARKO
What the hell is this?

DAN
(still pulling the belt)
Mr. Barko, I know we signed the papers and all that, but we're afraid that this is just too hard on Ronnie and we're going to have to back out of our agreement.

MR. BARKO

What was that?

DAN
I'm afraid we're going to have to...

Just then the door opens and Mr. Green is coming in with the M.C. and the band... all are smiling.

M.C.
You won!!! Congratulations!

Everyone is yelling then they see this situation then everyone is quiet.

MR. BARKO
Thanks, Gary, look... could you leave us alone for a while to discuss this thing... yeah, thanks Gary.

M.C. (GARY)
Yeah, sure, Mr. Barko, sure.

MR. BARKO
Green, you stay. Everyone else OUT!

Everyone but Mr. Green leaves and the door is shut. The nurse and doctor are moaning crazily.

MR. BARKO
See, Ronnie just won us the recording deal. You can't pull out now... this will mean thousands and thousands of dollars for you.

BOB
We don't want to discuss it.

DAN
He said it right, no more discussions.

MR. BARKO
Mr. Green...

Mr. Green pulls out a large pistol and points it in Bob and Dan's direction.

MR. BARKO (CONT'D)

Let the doctor loose. Green, undo the nurse.

DAN
We keep the doctor!!!

BOB
(standing and yelling)
We'll keep the doctor!!!

MR. BARKO
What's this? Green... damn it you guys...

Mr. Green walks over and places his pistol right at Dan's head. Suddenly Dan releases the doctor.

DAN
ALL RIGHT THEN!!

DOCTOR
(screams)
Mr. Barko. Mr. Barko.

BOB
Stop it!!!

MR. BARKO
Shut-up everybody!!
(to the doctor)
Now what is it?

DOCTOR
I know these two from the institute... they were thrown out...
(gagging some)
experimenting... with terminal cases, they're perverts ... they've probably stolen this Ronnie and built him like this. They're clumsy butchers and wanted by the authorities.

DEBORAH
No! No!

MR. BARKO
(smiling as if heaven itself fell into his lap)

So, the deal is off, is it? We're hurting your poor little son. Now you guys listen to me for a while. If you want to stay out of trouble, and I'm sure you do, you'll continue along just the way we discussed. If you're good you'll get the money we talked about. You will look after Ronnie and keep him in perfect health. If there is any trouble, we'll blow the big whistle. Do you understand?

DAN AND BOB
We understand.

They both give the doctor a dirty look.

MR. BARKO
Good... then all is well again. I have a very good feeling things will be going our way from now on... Do you feel it, too?

Dan and Bob realize they're caught.

MR. BARKO (CONT'D)
GREEN! Bring everyone in.

Mr. Green opens the door and the band and the M.C. come in. Bob helps Ronnie into a sitting position. Ronnie's eyes are glazed over.

MR. BARKO (CONT'D)
We start rehearsals tomorrow at the record company. Hall number seven. We're going to make it... we were just discussing... we all have a good feeling about the whole thing.

Fred, the bass player, realizes that the nurse is still tied up, he removes the tape from her mouth. A cooing, moaning sigh escapes through her sore, but full and beautiful lips. The doctor sees Fred to do this. All eyes go to the doctor as he yells:

DOCTOR
Don't you touch her!

And, he rushes to his nurse.

REHEARSAL HALL. Dan and Bob and Deborah look at each other worried because Ronnie has been talking to himself in the microphone... saying frantic little half sentences, word fragments. Johnny is trying to work on a song and find out new sounds Ronnie can make or cause the band to make.

RONNIE
(into microphone)
night / ho... circle... stop...
bad circle, Diana.

JOHNNY
You guys try different things this time, we're getting somewhere. I want to use this guy, use him to our best advantage... right, Mr. Barko?

MR. BARKO
Get to work, Johnny.

RONNIE
(now whining very high)
Bang/jump/Ronnie Rocket/OW...

JOHNNY
All right... let's go.

RONNIE
Go.

The entire band is now wearing black rubber gloves and boots in order to protect themselves from the electricity. Johnny plugs Ronnie in. Ronnie's eyes bug out and he starts to shimmy across the stage. The drummer, AL, is going with Ronnie. Fred and Johnny start experimenting. They move levers and walk closer to Ronnie, stand at different angles to him, etc. Their sounds starts going up and down or louder or softer. Sometimes, speakers begin to screech and Ronnie, himself, is twirling, crawling, jumping, gagging, mimicking Johnny's voice or lying out flat on the floor, twitching. Electricity is flying all around.

After the rehearsal, Dan and Bob attend to Ronnie. A close up of Ronnie reveals bad eyes and a dopey look. Also, a small amount of blood in the ears. They are very concerned for his health. Bob is checking out Ronnie's electrical device because he is now waking wide-eyed, then nodding off to sleep in the next moment.

DAN
Ronnie? Ronnie?

Ronnie nods off. Bob gives him a shot, and they plug him in. Mr. Barko comes in the room.

MR. BARKO
How is he?

DAN
Not good... we're hurting him bad.

MR. BARKO
Fix him. I don't want to keep hearing discouraging news. If you need any medicine, or... materials or whatever, I'll get 'em. But keep that kid working.

BOB
If he's hurting any more than this, it's over!!

MR. BARKO
Take care, my friends... quit threatening me. I've been very cordial and nice... don't let's get nasty. You'll never win that game with me. Just get set to enjoy your fortune your little rocket is going to bring in.

BOB
(stands up, knees bent some)
You know, Barko, I don't like you.
(Yells)
How would you like a great big fat bloody nose?!

Mr. Barko snaps his fingers and Mr. Green comes in. Mr. Barko points to Bob. Mr. Green starts toward Bob.

BOB
Oh yeah?

Bob hauls off and slugs out toward Mr. Green. Mr. Green catches his hand and crunches it. The bones breaking make a sickening sound. Bob falls down moaning, holding his hand. Dan flies toward

Mr. Green and shoots a punch into his stomach. It doesn't do much. Mr. Green then decks Dan. Dan bleeds from the mouth. Ronnie, Dan and Bob are all hurting and moaning.

MR. BARKO
Doya want to stop getting money? Do you want to go to prison? Watch out... next time, Mr. Green won't go so easy, but there better not be a next time. See you at the recording studio at nine tonight.

Green and Barko leave.

Bob's hand is pretty bad and Dan is not feeling too good either. They stay on the floor. Ronnie is watching them.

BOB
(whispering)
Things aren't working out too well.

At the recording studio--Bob's hand is wrapped in gauze and Dan is black and blue on the upper cheek. Ronnie is in front of the microphone going up and down on his tip toes speaking small bits of nonsense in a nervous way.

RONNIE
(quickly)
It hurts too much/it hurts too much/ No/No/you go/all of it/A,B,C,D,E,F,G/ No/Magic Hank... break circle break circle... Diane.

The band is ready to go and is waiting, pacing around. Ronnie continues to babble. Up in the control booth an engineer is looking at Ronnie. He pushes a button and his voice booms out.

ENGINEER
Is this what the kid does?

MR. BARKO
No, No.

ENGINEER
Then shut the kid up for a while, will you?

MR. BARKO

(to Dan and Bob)
Hey, shut him up for a while.

Bob and Dan go cut and stand with Ronnie by the microphone.

MR. BARKO (CONT'D)
Just keep him quiet for a while.

Dan and Bob hold Ronnie and check over his device and look into his eyes. Ronnie is shaking.

DAN
It's okay, Ronnie, it's okay.

He and Bob are each holding a hand.

RONNIE
Bad electricity... reverse...

Bob and Dan hear this and look at each other.

DAN
Bob... I think there could be a different kind of electricity... Do you think there could be a different kind of electricity?

BOB
I don't think so... but maybe.

DAN
Isn't that what I just said!!!

ENGINEER
All right, when you're ready...

MR. BURKO
Let's go, Johnny.

JOHNNY
Okay.

Everyone moves into position and Dan, Bob and Mr. Barko go and stand off to the side to watch. The Engineer starts rolling tape. Johnny plugs in Ronnie and he screams a short scream... shoots some lightening and falls to the ground. A LOUD DRUM BEAT.

Ronnie jerks and says "No."

Another beat.

Then the bass and guitar begin to play and Ronnie begins to vibrate on the floor. He gags out some sparks and then whines from real low to real high and gets up only to drop again. Quiet, a heavy beat. Ronnie howls a weird electrical sound and his eyes strain, in the control booth, two engineers scramble for a smoking box which is shooting sparks. The bass begins again, Ronnie jitters to his feet gets a shock from the microphone. Makes some series of noises into the microphone and the organ, guitar and bass and drums start to really go. Johnny's echo begins to sing and Ronnie begins to mimick. He's really moving to the beat. They've got him in a great little black suit and it looks good with-his pompadore red hair wig. After a long whine at the end, Johnny pulls the plug. Ronnie collapses and crawls around on the floor.

Up stairs, the engineers have a fire extinguisher out and they're spraying a whole smoking area of equipment. The room is cloudy with smoke, and there is an ominous electrical hum going signaling some sort of malfunction.

ENGINEER
(upset)
That's great... the kid blew out all my equipment.

The engineer starts coughing because of all the smoke.

ENGINEER (CONT'D)
(now over the P.A. system)
I think we got it... stand by for playback...

A close up of a huge speaker and horn as the song is played back. A shiny black spinning record lap dissolves out of the speakershot and neon flashes "RONNIE ROCKET". Several rock and roll shots follow as the song continues, load.

--tiny factory kids bop in front of an old floor radio.

--a strange greaser dances in an alley.

--several bee-hive stacked girls snapping their fingers to the beat

NICE LONG DISSOLVE:

INT. BILL'S APT - DEEP CITY - NIGHT

CU. Detective's eyes very bright.

Terry is watching Bill shine an old flashlight into the Detective's eyes, like a doctor would do.

TERRY
Look at him Bill... He's hard to kill. So you see anything?

BILL
No... not yet. Is he stupid or what?

TERRY
I don't know... he's been down on Memory Lane... you know that.

BILL
Yeah. He's still conscious. And Hank was down there too.

TERRY
He was??

BILL
Did this guy say anything?

TERRY
Yes...

BILL
Like what?

TERRY
Like, what's goin on and stuff like that... you know... regular stuff.

BILL
I'm gonna kill him.

TERRY
Yeah... I know that... He's sure out of it... got some sort of real jolt of electricity I'd say.

BILL
You were supposed to stay with him.

TERRY
Yes sir... that is what I tried to do and this is what I was trying to do.

Terry nervously rises and crosses the room.

BILL
Terry, come over here.

TERRY
What are you going to do?

BILL
Come here... I'm going to hurt you.

TERRY
Oh, please don't.

BILL
I am though.

Bill crosses the room to Terry.

BILL (CONT'D)
Get on your hands and knees.

TERRY
What are you going to do?

BILL
I'm going to punch you in the head three times.

TERRY
(as Bill hits him)
Oh!! OW!!! AW!!

BILL
Now go sit down.

Terry stands up and starts to cross back over by the Detective. Bill is following but they both stop. The Detective has drawn his gun and is aiming at them both.

DETECTIVE
Sit down... both of you.

As they sit down Bill's wife Eleane comes in the room.

ELEANE
Is this the man?

BILL
This is him -- he's the Detective from the outer city. Coming deeper into the city he's causing himself trouble.

ELEANE
What are you going to do?

BILL
I don't know. He's going to be doing the doing. He's got a pistol there.

DETECTIVE
(to Terry)
I thought you said he knows Hank Bartells.
(to Everyone)
He doesn't know Hank Bartells any better than I do. He couldn't get us into the Inner City.

TERRY
He does!! You know him, don't you Bill?

BILL
Shut up.

DETECTIVE
See... he doesn't.

BILL
Hey... big hole in the face... 'shut it or I'll cut your lips off.

Terry leans over and whispers into Bills' ear. As irritated as Bill always is with Terry he listens anyway.

TERRY
(whispering in Bill's ear)

See?... he's pretty sharp. Maybe we should take him into the inner city and then, you know, he'll be more confused and all and you can kill him then...

BILL
I'm gonna get that gun away him and kill him now... What the hell do I need to take him in the inner city for?

TERRY
(still whispering)
Bill... he can stand on one foot.

Bill turns, aghast.

DETECTIVE
You all said no one can go into the inner city, then you said Bill can cause he knows Hank Bartells... now you say you won't... I can you can't.

TERRY
You have been in there... haven't you Bill?

BILL (to Detective)
You can stand on one foot?

DETECTIVE
Yes.

BILL
Show me.

The Detective stands and lifts one foot. He holds the position long enough to prove his point.

BILL (CONT'D)
(quietly to Terry)
It's hard to kill a man who can stand on one foot.

TERRY
Yes... It's the inner city then?

BILL

If I can get that gun away from him, I think it'll have to be otherwise he'll be right back as a memory. And a memory is just as dangerous in this old world. Plus I'd like to prove to the son of a bitch I can get in there.

TERRY
That's right.

BILL
(turning from Terry to the Detective)
How are you getting along in the city, Mr. Detective? No so good, I'd say. You don't understand our ways.
(Bill is chain smoking now next to a huge ashtray of butts by his chair.)
You haven't done anything since you got here. You haven't solved anything. You have a few clues maybe, but nothing more. This what amazes me. You won't succeed. You can't. You think you're in control right now. You've got the gun. You have no control. In a few minutes "Science World" will be on. The neighbor boy, Riley, will come over. By the end of the show, you will be sitting there but you won't understand any more than you do now, and I'll have the gun on you.

DETECTIVE
No you won't.

There's a knock on the door.

BILL
Come on in, Riley!

RILEY comes in and shuts the door. He is dressed in a dirty white t-shirt and black pants and shoes. He has black, greasy hair.

RILEY
Hi, Bill.

BILL

Come on, Riley, Science World's almost on... you're a little late.

RILEY
I was workin!

The presence of Riley as so accurately predicted by Bill makes the Detective nervous. Bill smiles at the Detective

BILL
What did I tell ya?
(now to Riley)
Turn the set on Riley... let's see "Science World."

Riley goes to the set. Eleane sits down on the couch across the room with two of her children. They are like animals, bouncing on the couch, laughing jeering little laughs and hitting Eleane in the face over and over. She never does anything to stop them. They are totally out of control.

Science World comes on with at first some very strange music. Then we see three men, two of them in white lab coats, the third in a baggy tweed suit.

The lab coated scientists (#l and #2) are assembling a metal box with electrical equipment inside. The other man is watching them. #1 is having trouble putting in a screw on the back panel.

#2 wants to help, but is not because he wants to let his partner do it alone. The man, on the other hand, thinks he can put the screw in better himself, so he is trying to get close and do it, but #2 is pressing very hard against the man to keep him away from his partner. The man is pressing very hard too, but it is a stand off, basically... every now and again, one inches the other back, but each is holding his own. Meanwhile, #1 keeps turning the screw but it keeps getting a bad start and keeps popping out onto the floor.

The Detective looks over at Bill who is standing up.

DETECTIVE
Where are you going? Sit down.

BILL
Just to the table there for some smokes.

DETECTIVE
All right... but, I'm watching you.

He watches Bill move further away from him into the shadowy dining room. Terry and Riley give each other nervous 'looks. The Detective almost catches this. He looks at each of them, then back up to Bill who is far away now, wearing a big smile and disappearing into the darkness on the far side of the dining room. He is gone. Riley looks very nervous and so does Terry. Suddenly from directly behind the Detective chair's Bill pops up. He knocks the gun from the Detective's hand. It flies to the floor. Bill gets the Detective in a hammerlock hold.

BILL
Terry! Pick up the gun.

As Terry goes for the gun.

DETECTIVE (to Terry)
I thought you were my friend.

TERRY
Think again.

Terry hands the gun to Bill as Bill comes around to face the Detective.

BILL
Where's your gun, Bud? Why... it's right here pointin' a bullet right through your nose... and remember... behind that nose is that delicate little sack of brains. What a mess that is when it's blowed open... so you want to meet Hank Bartells... Is that it?

DETECTIVE
Yeah... I've been telling Terry here that since I met 'im. I sure do.

BILL
Well I knew you were stupid but I didn't know how stupid till now... OK... I'm takin' you in as soon as I get the go ahead from Hank. I'll talk to him later... until then come here... I gotta

nice little room next to mine where I want you to stay.

The Detective is sitting on a low single bed, the only piece of furniture in the small room with one window. Bill stands at the door.

BILL
My wife and I are sleeping right outside your door. Don't try to leave... remember... I have the gun.

Bill shuts the door and the Detective is alone. He lays down, props his head up with the filthy feather pillow and crosses his feet. Outside the window dust and smoke are blowing silently.

DETECTIVE
(to himself)
Why are they going to let me in the inner city so easily? ... I think that's the only place they can kill me. What a world.

DISSOLVE TO:

Later the Detective hears the door open slowly and he waits in fear to see who will enter. It is Eleane, Bill's wife. She comes into the room in her robe and closes the door behind her. In the grey half light she moves closer to the Detective. She opens her robe and shows the Detective her breasts as she moves her tongue around her lips. The Detective stares at her. Suddenly there is a "crack" and she instantly covers herself and freezes. They realize it was only a floor board or something but the magic sexual moment has been destroyed. She whimpers.

ELEANE
The boy Riley wants to see you in the living room. Be very quiet, Bill's a very light sleeper.

The Detective gets up and Eleane guides him past Bill sleeping, down a hallway and lets him go alone into the living room while she stands guard. Riley nods to the Detective. The Detective looks at Riley curiously. Riley shows the Detective a small black box.

RILEY
I made it... watch...

He plugs the box into a wall socket and turns on the television. He clips another cord from the black box onto the aerial on top of the T.V. He starts turning a dial. A hum starts and it gets lower and lower until on the television they start to see an image. It is Ronnie. The Detective is amazed. He gets closer to the set. He looks at Riley. Riley smiles. The Detective smiles back then they watch Ronnie. He is being attended by Bob and Dan. Deborah is in the background.

DETECTIVE
I recognize them.

RILEY
Doctors... I've been watching them. They're good people, trying to help Ronald. He's getting too much electricity though... you gotta hurry... I've been taking readings.

DETECTIVE
Who knows about this?

RILEY
You and me... you gotta get to Hank Bartells fast.

DETECTIVE
Yeah I know... I've been trying.

Just then there is a scream. Eleane comes flying into the livingroom and falls face down, all bloody. Riley shuts the image off instantly. Bill stands smiling but enraged.

BILL
(yelling)
TERRY... TERRY WE'RE GOIN NOW. GET UP.
(then he speaks to the Detective and Riley)
We're going on a trip... you too Riley my little science friend it'll be just the little trip you've always dreamed of.

Terry comes out in a daze. He's still pulling up his pants and hooking his belt.

TERRY

WHERE WE GOIN?

BILL
(smiling)
The inner city.

Eleane moans in her painful state of unconsciousness.

EXT. DARK FIELD - GATE HOUSE - NIGHT

The Detective and Riley are led through the darkness by Bill who holds the gun on them. Terry follows. They approach a small gate house by a huge old corroded chain link fence. Above the gate there is a dirty neon white circle of light. A crowd of knitters have gathered and are following the detective. "Isn't he a honey?" "... oh I could just eat him up" they say. Bill is furious with the knitters.

BILL
Damn knitters...
(yelling at them)
Get the hell out of here!

TERRY
(to Detective)
See the circle?

DETECTIVE
Shut up Terry... Nobody's talking to you any more...

TERRY
Watch out around here...

BILL
Shut up you two... Now stop right there at the gate.
(Knitters move in closer)
GET AWAY!! FILTHY KNITTERS... GET OUT!!!

Bill goes into the gatehouse furious. The Detective watches him talking to two men in uniform. Riley shares a nervous look with the Detective. Terry paces and as he paces he paces up near the Gate house. The Detective watches him curiously. Terry moves near the window of the gatehouse. He stands looking inside. The buzz of the neon circle is loud. Now the two guards are coming out with Bill. The knitters have now moved very far away in the darkness.

GUARD #1
... this I gotta see... Hey which one of you can stand on one leg?...
(the Detective steps forward)
... You?

DETECTIVE
Yes.

GUARD #2
Let's see you do it... and while you're at it we heard you could speak as you do it... so do that too.

The Detective raises his foot once again and holds it up with his hand. As he stands on the one foot he speaks.

DETECTIVE
The Detective's Motto... stay alert... concentrate... stay clean.

Far away the knitters all ooh and aah... so impressed with the Detective.

GUARD #1
I'll be damned and he's close to the line too...

BILL
By the way tell the Detective what that ole line is.

The Guard points to a point beyond the gate, then to the Detective, who remains on one foot.

GUARD #1
See out there around that rock. That's about forty feet inside. That's where the power will hit and you sure as hell won't be able to stand on one foot out there. You'll feel ground dip way down and as you go in there you'll feel it come over ... and the closer you get to station the worse it gets.

The Detective comes back to a two-legged stand.

DETECTIVE
Are there people in there?... other than Hank Bartells.

GUARD #2
Sure there's people... they're all over the place...
(Riley looks at the Detective.)

GUARD #1
You'll love 'em.

GUARD #2
Take 'em in Bill...

BILL
OK-you guys, let's go... come on let's show this Detective what he's missing... come on... Go.

He makes the Detective and Riley go first and hurries to follow. In the distance the knitters all call "careful."

GUARD #1
So long!

He and the other guard laugh.

GUARD #2
It's been good to know ya.

The darkness seems to swallow them up as they go through the gate. They are getting closer and closer to the rock and the forty foot mark. The Detective looks back but the guard house is so dark he can barely see it and it seems at least a hundred feet away. Now he looks at Bill and Terry. Bill is smiling such an evil smile. Terry is looking nervously about. Riley is now looking at him and nodding at the marker rock which they just passed. The ground begins sloping rapidly downwards. The Detective looks out ahead. Darkness. Old pipes. Oily black ground. Old wires. An electrical hum is heard slightly. Then suddenly the hum is thunderous. The buzzing is deafening. They all (except Bill) begin to walk funny. They have trouble keeping their balance. Now the Detective looks back. The gatehouse is gone. Bill is laughing but the other sounds drown it out. The Detective holds his head. He feels so strangely ill. Riley is unable to walk correctly. Terry is struggling. The

sounds now begin to decrease but the effect of the electricity remains. Suddenly Terry yells out.

TERRY
NOW!!!

He leaps on Bill's back, knocking the pistol away. The pistol flips up, out, and into a small oil sludge pool and it disappears!

TERRY
Get the gun!!
(the voice is very strange)

DETECTIVE
(smiling up at Terry then quickly running to find the gun only to realize that it's sunk beyond retrieving)
It's gone.
(strange garbled voice)

Terry is riding Bill around as if he was a horse. He tries to bring him down but Bill is too strong.

TERRY
We got to kill him... hurry!! Find something to kill him with quick! I can't hold him!

Riley and the Detective race and wobble around in the darkness trying to find some sort of a weapon as Terry rides the screaming madman Bill around in a wild circle. Finally Riley finds a piece of iron pipe and yells out then gives it to the Detective. The Detective weighs it in his hands then goes after Bill. He swings. He hits Terry in the back.

TERRY
OWW! Not me!!

DETECTIVE
... SORRY.

He swings again and this time hits Bill real hard in the head. Some blood shoots out but Bill remains VERY strong. Bill screams out. He tries to kick the Detective. The Detective swings again and smashes Bill's nose. Blood gushes. He swings again. The swing

misses. Riley finds a rock and waits for a good shot. He throws and hits Terry square in the head.

TERRY
Ahh.

RILEY
Sorry Terry!!... sorry!

Riley goes to find another rock. The Detective swings again. This time the pipe lands on top of Bill's head. There is a loud cracking sound and more blood but Bill keeps going, even wilder than before. The Detective hits again and again, striking severe blows. Terry wrenches Bill's neck this way and that trying to bring him down. Riley finds a brick and finally finds a shot. The brick hits Bill in the forehead. He staggers. The Detective connects four more times with solid blows with the pipe. Bill's smile and his screams disappear. A dazed wild look takes their place. He falls to his knees. The Detective raises the pipe as high as he can and gives Bill the final blow. Bill collapses, face first into a small mound of sludge. The three of them share a look of relief as they catch their breath.

DETECTIVE
Thank God you're on our side Terry.

TERRY
Did you ever have any doubt, sucker?

DETECTIVE
You know I did.

Terry smiles, then Riley and the Detective follow. Suddenly Riley produces from his pocket a black electrical box and several feet of cord.

RILEY
(laughing, bouncing up and down)
Look what I smuggled in!

They all laugh happily then. Terry's smile fades as he stands up.

TERRY
I don't know why we're laughing... This place is the worst. There's people here... Yeah... but watch out... they'll

kill you for nothin. A lot of 'em have warts... all sorts of diseases... God...
(almost crying)
What are we gonna do?

DETECTIVE
Take it easy Terry... Let's just not to get caught by any of 'em and find Hank Bartells.

TERRY
Yeah... and then what... he's worse than all of 'em put together. What can we do?

DETECTIVE
We won't know that till we find him... then... look? We have to try to save Ronald.

RILEY
(looking at his black box)
There's a hell of a lot of bad electricity around here!

They head out into the darkness.

DISSOLVE TO:

MAIN CITY

We're back with Ronnie, moving backstage to a room where Ronnie is sitting with the rest of the band. Fred gets a big black electrical box out from under a table and takes it over to the rest of the guys and Ronnie.

JOHNNY
You better not let Dan and Bob see that.

FRED
I won't. Hey, Ronnie, look at this.
(Ronnie looks)
This is going to give you more electricity... get a BIG SHOCK.

RONNIE
No.

FRED
We're gonna give you a big shock tonight!

RONNIE
No, no!

AL
You little zit... you're going to be all over that stage tonight.

They laugh.

AL (CONT'D)
He's gonna need those doctors tonight.

They laugh some more. Ronnie starts to cry, but he doesn't cry very well, just little sobs.

JOHNNY
Hey, we're just havin' fun.

RONNIE
Bob... Dan.

JOHNNY
They'll be here in a minute, don't worry. Shit... what a little worrier.

FRED
We'll give him something to really worry about tonight.
(laughs)

RONNIE
NO!

JOHNNY
Shut up, Fred.

Mr. Barko is backstage looking for Dan and Bob. Dan, Bob and Deborah are talking together in the back. Mr. Barko approaches them.

MR. BARKO
Where have you been? Ronnie was calling for you... you better get in there and get him ready. Here's your check for this

month. It's much smaller than usual... we had heavy expenses. You understand that don't you? I'm sure you do.

(Barko starts the walk away.)

By the way, we're doing the first two numbers with Electra tonight, I want Ronnie in good shape. Come on... go... go!

Dan and Bob and Deborah head for Ronnie's room.

BOB

We're going to go... so... don't worry, Barko.

DAN

Then it's tonight? All agreed?

They all shake hands together.

DEBORAH

My darlings.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. INNER CITY - NIGHT

(Note: All inner city scenes will have distorted walking and talking.)

The Detective, Terry and Riley all have knitting needles, pin cushions and various pain devices tied all over them. They all look like Van Gogh bandaged after he cut off his ear. Still they walk and talk strangely. When they feel real strange they pierce themselves with another needle or pin. They are in a very brutal area of the inner City. They are just now entering a dark street of row houses. They are creeping along in the black shadows. In the distance a GIGANTIC BLACK ELECTRIC FACTORY CAN BE SEEN SPEWING TONS OF BLACK SMOKE OUT THROUGH ONE HUNDRED BLACK STACKS. GIANT ELECTRICAL HUMS AND ARCINGS PERMEATE THE AIR. The small street lights rattle and pulsate violently. It is as if a thousand subway trains were just below.

TERRY

We've got to get off the street. There's all those black coats out to kill us...

we should find a place to stay inside... quick.

DETECTIVE
All right, let's find a house... let's look inside some... find one that looks good.

They sneak up to the closest window and peer in. Inside, they see a very dirty fat man in a t-shirt, tying a knot in a big rose. His face has many warts.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
(reacting to the man)
Next house.

TERRY
You don't get it, do you?

DETECTIVE
(quietly)
Get what?

TERRY
Never mind.

DETECTIVE
What the hell are you mumbling about now? Tell me.

TERRY
Nothin'... except that things keep goin' round and round. You got to remember that... round and round... round and round... Get it?

DETECTIVE
What the hell is there to get?

TERRY
That's why I said never mind. Fresh face... Nevermind is nevermind. How would you like it if I started yelling "nevermind" here?

DETECTIVE
Just shut up.

They creep to another window. Inside is a fairly nice looking dark-haired woman with just a few warts on her face. Her house looks dark, except for back in the kitchen area where she is pouring herself something to drink. They stay crouched down outside the window--playing it safe.

RILEY
Oh oh... here come some more black coats.

A gang of men in dark overcoats come walking quickly down the street. They each look with fear as the gang approaches.

TERRY
Stay down and shut up!

DETECTIVE
(suddenly excited)
Terry.

TERRY
Shut up!

DETECTIVE
Terry! Listen! What did you say about everything being a circle?

TERRY
Hey, let's have a nice talk about this later.

DETECTIVE
No... NOW...

TERRY
Well whisper then or you'll be lookin' for your arms an' legs all up and down this street, sucker.

DETECTIVE
(whispering)
OK OK... tell me again about the circle.

TERRY
It's like I said... we go around and around... like a merry go round... Where it stops NOBODY knows.

DETECTIVE
I know.

TERRY
Where?

DETECTIVE
With Hank.

TERRY
OK maybe--so?

DETECTIVE
Did you ever look at those symbols Ronnie gave me? ... how one of 'em shows a broken circle?... Do you remember how mad that Donut Man got when his shoes got untied?

TERRY
Hey... you're not pullin' the symbolic bit on me are you big fella?

DETECTIVE
Well maybe you're right... these symbols are important maybe... a broken circle... a broken shoelace... both the same... life is a donut... a circle... the circle club... the circles at the gatehouse.

RILEY
I think he's right Terry.

TERRY
OK so how does it help us?... wait a minute bud... you want to try out your theory?

DETECTIVE
How?

TERRY
We wait here for a donut man they... they always are tying their shoes... you're right about that... and they're getting mad... but that day someone pointed the shoelaces out... someone yelled "your

shoelaces are untied!... So you yell it out... and we'll see what happens.

RILEY
You gonna do it?

DETECTIVE
Yeah... Yeah... OK I'll give it a try...

DISSOLVE TO:

Detective, Terry and Riley behind bushes watching the street.

RILEY
Here comes one... but look... he's with a whole bunch of black coats.

TERRY
Yell it now while they're far away.

DETECTIVE
OK... are you guys ready to run.

TERRY / RILEY
Ready... yeah... do it!

DETECTIVE
(loud)
YOUR SHOELACES ARE UNTIED!!!

There is a pause. They see the donut man stop--look down at his shoes. Suddenly he screams. Two black coats catch on fire; then the donut man bursts into flame during his third horrifying scream. All the other black coats disperse instantly. The street is quiet. Three burning bodies in the distance.

Terry, Riley and the Detective stare at each other in silence.

DETECTIVE
W ..... O .....W

TERRY
By God!!

RILEY
Great balls of fire!!

TERRY
Do you think it'll work on Hank?

DETECTIVE
I don't know... It sure worked on them though.

TERRY / RILEY
It sure did.

TERRY
But will it work on Hank?

DETECTIVE
I don't know.

TERRY
It sure worked on them.

RILEY
It sure did.

MAIN CITY

Newspaper headline: Ronnie Rocket Shocks the World!

Newspaper photo of screaming boy. Caption underneath reads: "IT BURNS" YELLED ONE YOUNG BOY.

Newspaper photo of small child on bicycle. His mother stands next to him with plate of dinner. Caption underneath reads: He rode a bike steadily for seven days! Cause: ELECTRICITY FROM RONNIE ROCKET CONCERT. Newspaper photo of group of girls: hair standing up in the air. Caption underneath reads: IT MAKES US FEEL FUNNY. Newspaper photo of screaming girl. Caption underneath reads: "I CAN TOUCH HIM --- CALL ME "ELECTRA CUTE." Newspaper photo of tap dancing girl: "Before Ronnie Rocket I didn't know what tap dancing was!"

A stage curtain, bright lights, audience cheers and applause as the M.C. comes out to introduce the nights show.

M.C.
Tonight!!! RONNIE ROCKET!!! ELECTRA CUTE!! THE BIG SAX BAND. Ladies and gentlemen, RONNIE ROCKET AND ELECTRA CUTE!!

The curtain opens. Ronnie is onstage with the band. There is a long drum roll, then Johnny plugs Ronnie in. He starts vibrating and sparking. Electra Cute comes tap dancing in from the side. She tap dances up to Ronnie and touches him and suddenly she's all aglow. She starts shrieking out a high pitched song. Her act is that she sings and moves as if she's being electrocuted by high voltage. She sings two songs. After the first song, she dances over to Ronnie to get a new charge from him. She really gets going. Ronnie gets going, too, but pretty much ends up banging his head against the floor over and over again and occasionally shoots out some sparks. Electra Cute gets lots of applause when she finishes... then she leaves. Johnny helps Ronnie back up to the microphone. He mumbles a few things and the audience applauds thunderously. Then Ronnie falls over. Johnny signals to Fred and he pushes one of the levers on the new black box. There is a loud humming sound and the lights dim. Ronnie starts flipping. Johnny helps him up again. This time the band starts right in. Fred gives another jab to the lever. Ronnie mimicks out one of Johnny's songs. The crowd is loving every minute of it. Just at the one song ends the music seques into another tune, the lighting changes and a back curtain opens. Out come one hundred heavy-duty saxophone players, rocking together with Ronnie Rocket. Ronnie is flipping and jumping, sparking and smoking and finally moaning bug-eyed on the floor after his wig blows off sometime during the number. His bald head with some fat brown hairs, is sweating and when Johnny pulls the plug, Ronnie collapses and writhes in a bad fit on the stage floor. They close the curtains. The audience stamps and yells for more Ronnie Rocket. Dan and Bob rush out and carry Ronnie to his room. They give him a shot. Ronnie is in real bad shape. Deborah sits at his side holding his little hand. Upon checking the electrical chest device, Bob notices that the rubber bag is filled with green fluid.

BOB
Look at this.

DEBORAH
What is it?

DAN
Poisons... from too much electricity.

Bob lets some of the fluid out and puts it in a small jar and holds it to the light. The fluid smokes a bit.

BOB

It's cloudy, too. We've got to get him back to the lab and put him through the RZ.

DAN
You're sure right about that Bob.

Mr. Barko comes in.

MR. BARKO
Fix him quick... we've got another show coming up.

DAN
No more tonight he's out cold.

MR. BARKO
(yelling)
Don't you give me he's out cold, again. Don't you give me he's out cold. He better not be out cold--he better be out on that stage tonight, and soon!!

BOB
Look at him.

Mr. Barko looks down momentarily then up at Dan and Bob.

MR. BARKO
FIX HIM!!!

Dan reaches into his bag and begins pouring out a bottle of clear liquid onto a large cotton pad. Bob catches on just as Dan jumps on Mr. Barko. Bob leaps up also and together they administer the knock-out drug to Mr. Barko. He falls on the floor.

In front of the backstage area a crowd of girls is being held back. They are screaming for Ronnie. Bob and Dan carry Ronnie out back to the car with Deborah. They lock the door on Mr. Barko before leaving. The four of them drive through the night. They carry Ronnie up to the laboratory and put him in the special chair after double locking the door. They hook Ronnie up with all the wires again and set to work on him. Deborah is helping by giving moral support.

INNER CITY

The Detective, Terry and Riley are still hiding behind the bushes.

RILEY
Here come some more!

DETECTIVE
Let's not test our luck...

TERRY
We gotta get in off this street... I never seen so many donut men.

They make their way back to the front door of the dark haired woman's house. They knock on the door. Riley sees through the window and watches her come across the dark front room. She opens the door ever so slightly.

WOMAN
Who is it?

DETECTIVE
We are new here... we want to get off the streets... could we come in just for a little while.

WOMAN
(looking at them)
No, get away... no... leave.

TERRY
Those black coats are comin' closer.

DETECTIVE
Look... we're coming in...
(He pushes the door open and they go in. He covers her mouth with his hand.)
We mean no harm. Please let us stay here... for just a while, until we learn where to go from here... all right?

The Woman is still for a while then she nods yes... The Detective releases his hold.

WOMAN
Get away from the windows. Come back with me.

They go into the kitchen. Terry looking around while she turns off the overhead light and closes the door. They are alone. She sits down at the kitchen table.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
Sit down.

They sit at the table with her. The Detective notices a glass of clear liquid with curdling on top. She sees him looking at her glass.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
My milk's gone bad...

DETECTIVE
What is that music?

He is referring to some strange roller rink type organ music coming from the basement.

WOMAN
My daughter is having a party in the basement.

DETECTIVE
That's nice... that's very nice.

WOMAN
Don't go down there.

TERRY
(quickly)
We won't go... don't worry.

The Woman reaches up and scratches one of her warts. It was irritated. Now that she is scratching it, it is turning red. The Detective and Terry watch her do this.

TERRY
Ah... look... we don't mean to cause no trouble in this place... so...

WOMAN
I'm tired. I need sleep.

RILEY
She's sleepy.

DETECTIVE
Can we stay for a while longer?

WOMAN
Stay... I just have to sleep for a while. I got bad sick yesterday and now I feel weak, I need sleep. Just be quiet so I can sleep now.
(She puts her head on the table and soon falls asleep.)

TERRY
(whispering)
See... she's got the warts... a lot of 'em have warts. I told you that. They're having' a party in the basement... that's what that music is... she said don't go down there... believe me, I won't! We're lucky this one's nice. Letting us stay here. I hope those people don't come up here.

DETECTIVE
Quit talking about them.

TERRY
Hank Bartells got this city closed in so bad... God, I can feel it.

Terry starts to cry.

DETECTIVE
Come on.

WOMAN
(awake)
What is it?

DETECTIVE
Oh, he's crying about things. Come on...

TERRY

Okay, but... okay but... okay, but... that music is makin' me feel funny. I got to get comfortable... my leg is hurtin'.
(he hits his leg several times and digs into it some)

RILEY
We gotta stay alert around here Terry.

DETECTIVE
You said it, Riley! You listening Terry?

TERRY
This is what I'm tryin' to do. I'm trying'.

The woman begins to snore. Riley, Terry and the Detective sit quietly.

INT. BOB AND DAN'S LABORATORY - NIGHT

Ronnie is hooked up to all the old equipment. Bob, Dan and Deborah are huddled around him.

DEBORAH
Will he be all right?

DAN
He's so completely filled with poison.

DEBORAH
Will he be all right?

DAN
Yes... he will.

RONNIE
(mumbling)
Bad circle... reverse... electricity.

DEBORAH
I feel so strange something bad is going to happen I can feel it...

RONNIE
Something bad.

DEBORAH

Yes.

Meanwhile, downstairs out on the street, a car pulls up to a screeching halt. Mr. Barko and Mr. Green are in the back seat.

MR. BARKO
(very mad)
I want all of them down here.

MR. GREEN
Be right back.

Mr. Green starts up the stairs. He goes around a corner and up more flights of stairs. The hallways are hard and barren and Mr. Green's footsteps reverberate through the building.

INT. BOB AND DAN'S LABORATORY

DEBORAH
Whatever happens... remember we love you Ronnie... we love you.

RONNIE
... Love...

DEBORAH
Yes... we all love each other. We are a family... such a beautiful family...
(She holds them all tightly. Now they can hear Mr. Green's footsteps coming closer--they freeze.)

Mr. Green knocks on the laboratory door... he knocks again. He rattles the door and tries to open it. He waits and listens. Inside they remain frozen. Mr. Green goes back downstairs, but not before noticing that the lights are on. He goes out to the car and sits down next to Mr. Barko.

MR. GREEN
They're locked in there... the lights are on... they're not answering our call.

MR. BARKO
(turns to Green)
Those bastards just killed themselves... Let's go.

Mr. Barko and Mr. Green start up the stairs. Inside the laboratory, they hear footsteps again. More of them.

DAN
Deborah, get in the closet.

DEBORAH
No, I stay with you, where I belong.

DAN AND BOB
No.

DAN
Get into the closet... There might be trouble... please!!

Deborah goes into the closet... Dan pushes a bolt on the door so she can't come out and get hurt. Just then, Green blows the door open with a big hand gun. Mr. Barko and Mr. Green step into the laboratory and face Dan and Bob. Ronnie is still sitting in his chair in a deep sleep.

MR. BARKO
(quite loud)
End their lives!

Mr. Green raises his gun.

DAN
RUN!!!

Bob and Dan start running around the laboratory, trying to get to a safe place behind the big machinery. Mr. Green fires a shot. It strikes machinery and some sparks fly. The needles on some dials move and a humming sound is heard. Ronnie starts, coming to.

Mr. Green moves and sees Bob. He fires, but misses again. Ronnie starts to moan.

BOB
(fear in his voice)
Get out of here Barko, and leave us alone.

MR. BARKO
(calmly)
You'll be alone in a minute.

Mr. Green fires again. He hits a bunch of dials and controls. Needles jump and Ronnie's head goes back. He sits up some and starts meaning louder. The humming sound continues and other electrical sounds begin.

DAN
(from his hiding_place)
You okay Bob?

BOB
(yells backs)
Yeah!! Okay.

Dan picks up an old wrench and throws it at Mr. Green. It misses.

DAN
Out BARKO!!

Mr. Green moves slowly up between the machinery. He spots Bob. He fires just as Bob sees him. Bob is dead... a bullet in the chest.

DAN
Bob? You okay... Bob?

Mr. Green turns to pursue Dan.

DAN (CONT'D)
Bob!!

Ronnie is screaming now, very loud and the machinery is whinning and humming.

DAN (CONT'D)
I'm going to get you, Green... Bob!!!
BOB!!

Dan comes rushing out suddenly from behind the machines. He rushes toward Mr. Green. Green fires at him and blows Dan back but somehow the bullet doesn't kill him. Mr. Green fires again but his gun is empty. As he reloads,

DAN
(trying to get up)
Barko... you've wrecked us!! You wrecked us!! You wrecked us!! BOB!! BOB!!

Ronnie's still screaming and the machines are loud. As Dan pulls himself up he comes face to face with the screaming Ronnie.

Mr. Green has reloaded his gun. Mr. Barko smiles. Dan turns and Mr. Green shoots him in the head.

Mr. Green then goes around pulling out all the plugs. The machinery begins to whine down and finally the machines and Ronnie are quiet. But... there is still a scream and a pounding on the closet door. Mr. Green fires a shot through the door, the scream stops and there is a thud.

Deborah is gone, also.

MR. BARKO
Get the kid and let's get out of here.

MR. GREEN
You want any of this stuff?

MR. BARKO
Not I'll get my doctor to look after him from now on, he doesn't need this junk.

Mr. Green undoes Ronnie from the wires and picks him up. Ronnie is moaning.

RONNIE
(moans)
You wrecked us.

Mr. Green carries Ronnie out of the laboratory. Mr. Barko turns the lights off and follows him. The door slams shut. One small light remains on. It illuminates Dan's arm and head and Ronnie's special chair. The image turns into a wall of fire.

INNER CITY - DARK HAIRED WOMAN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Suddenly the door to the basement opens and a young girl sixteen years old comes into the kitchen. Her face is hideously covered with warts. Her teeth are broken and brown with bleeding gums. She eyes the three suspiciously and goes to the refrigerator. She opens the door. Inside she grabs some filthy piece of food-stuff out from amongst several decaying black cartons and cans and foul wrappings. She smiles the bloody broken toothed mouth at the Detective and goes back into the basement. The Detective can see the old piece of meat she retrieved from the refrigerator. It is

covered in a black and white smeared mould. After she disappears into the basement the three of them hear something in the livingroom. Voices. Men's voices.

DETECTIVE
Riley... take a look.

TERRY
Oh my God.

Riley goes to the kitchen door and opens it a crack. In the livingroom he sees a roomful of black coats. Smiling, milling around. One is coming toward him to the kitchen.

RILEY
Black coats.

Now the woman "snaps" awake. She has a hideous murderous grin on her face. She laughs and their skin crawls.

They fly down the basement stairs. Thunder above. Now they are in the dark basement, filled with slow dancers. Suddenly a girl slow dancer turns and comes running at them--arms out- stretched in front of her. Her mouth open, with blood all over her face. Slow dancers tearing at them, trying to bite them. They race into the bathroom and slam the door behind them. Fists knock loudly now on the other side. The Detective spots a small window up to street level.

DETECTIVE
Riley... up you go.

Terry and the Detective hoist Riley up to open the window. Suddenly the Detective feels a knife at his throat. He turns. Terry turns--still holding Riley aloft.

A girl named GERSTEIN dressed in a pretty chiffon dress is holding the knife.

GERSTEIN
(to Detective)
Stop... where are you going so fast?

DETECTIVE
We're trying to leave here. Please let us go.

GERSTEIN
Turn around... slow.

The Detective turns around. He sees Gerstein. She would be very pretty except her face is covered with warts. He can barely see it is so dark.

GERSTEIN
Dance with me.

DETECTIVE
Please let me leave... I have to leave.

GERSTEIN
Dance with me or I'll stab you and kill you.

The Detective begins to dance with her. She holds him very close and puts the blade of the knife right on the skin of his neck.

GERSTEIN
This is nice.

They dance for a while... the Detective can feel the blade on his neck.

GERSTEIN (CONT'D)
Play with my hair.

The Detective does as she says. He puts his fingers in her hair and gently rubs her hair and neck.

GERSTEIN (CONT'D)
Now kiss me.

Riley and Terry watch silently, holding VERY still.

The Detective feels her slide her wart covered faced over his cheek until their lips meet in quite a passionate kiss. The girl reaches up and pulls her shoulder straps down and pulls her dress and bra away from her breasts.

GERSTEIN
Feel me.

There in more knocking at the door. The music is still loud.

GERSTEIN (CONT'D)
(angry)
WHAT?

STEVE
Gerstein?... it's Steve... get out here, we're going.

GERSTEIN
In a minute.
(now to the Detective)
Feel me quick... do it...

The Detective feels her breasts and her head goes back in ectasy.

GERSTEIN (CONT'D)
(coming forward)
Get out the window.

STEVE
Hey, come on, get out here.
(he tries the door)
Come out here!!

Electric sparks shoot through the window, knocking Riley and Terry down. The Detective looks at his hand. Three of his fingers are on fire. Flames coming out of the ends of them. When Gerstein sees this she yells.

GERSTEIN
I'm coming now!!

She bolts through the door and Terry is able to pull it shut and lock it again while the Detective stares at his burning fingers. Riley climbs back to the window and yanks it open.

RILEY
It's open... let's go!!

TERRY
(referring to fingers)
What is it?

DETECTIVE
(as the flames go out)
It's a dream... Let's get out of here.

They all scramble out to street level. They run down the deserted dark, desolate street to hide in a corner factory building. In a nearby filthy oil field a group of black coats are running around crazily. They are catching dogs and throwing the dogs up about 100 feet through the air to the top of a building. The dogs land and yelp and bark and down below the men laugh and laugh. They run around and catch another dog and throw it up.

DETECTIVE
Damn dogs are everywhere.

TERRY
Dogs, black coats, donut men - Hank Bartells... Hey we're in trouble.

The Detective's eye is caught by a light on the right side of the field, high in the night sky. Then another light and another. The lights flare up and then fall to the ground in a streamer.

DETECTIVE
(very excited)
It's happening.

RILEY / TERRY
What's that?

DETECTIVE
Come on... It's those friends of Ronald's... hurry... It's Bob! And Dan! and Deborah!

TERRY
It is? Who are they?

They run across the field and in the darkness beyond three figures emerge coming toward them. They can barely walk the electricity is so bad. The Detective and Riley reach them first and Terry wobbles in last. The three stare at the three.

DETECTIVE
You're Bob and Dan and Deborah.

"Yes" they say.

DAN
Everything's on fire... this is the only place that's left.

TERRY
Things are really comin' apart.

DETECTIVE
I am a Detective... this is Terry and Riley, my friends we are all friends of Ronald's but we're the only friends in this area of the city... You're in the inner city now... that's Hank Bartells electrical power station right over there.

BOB
We were shot.

TERRY
Yeah but... yeah but...

DETECTIVE
Look... just don't lose consciousness... Terry, you better give 'em some pins or something.

DAN
There's a lot of electricity around here.

RILEY
You said it.

DEBORAH
Where is Ronnie?

DETECTIVE
Well... he's around.

BOB
What's that?
(referring to Riley's black box)

RILEY
It's a deflector I built... single phase... cuts through anything... you wanta see it?

BOB AND DAN
Yes...

They begin studying the black box and asking Riley questions.

DEBORAH
(crying)
What is happening?

DAN
(to Riley)
It looks like everything is reversed... we thought this but... say Bob... I think we were right... there's a different kind of electricity.

BOB
Snag that line up there and check the polarities will ya Riley... let me see a reading.

RILEY
Sure.

TERRY
(to Detective)
You better show Bob and Dan those symbols.

The Detective gets out the piece of paper with the symbols. As Riley gives Bob and Dart the reading they asked for they all study Donald's little drawings.

DAN
I must have seen him draw these a hundred times but never gave it a second thought.

BOB
Me neither.

DEBORAH
He was trying to tell us something... This is the most unfortunate thing that parents sometimes do not listen to the small words of their children.

DAN
I think there has to be some strong interference here.

DETECTIVE
There is... His name is Hank Bartells... he's somewhere here... possibly in that power station.

RILEY
All my readings indicate he's there...

DETECTIVE
This symbol is a circle and it is followed by this configuration. We want this... the broken circle... so we need this configuration.

DAN
The triangle needs reversing. I've heard of triangulation and I suppose it too has contrasting possibilities...

BOB
You mean... You mean... Hey... there's a triangulator in there and it's backwards...

DAN
Right Bob... and the circles are getting smaller.

DEBORAH
Oh... can you make it right?

TERRY
There's one helluva great big problem here... cause the closer anyone gets to that power station the harder it is to think... There's rumors that a person forgets his own name in there...
(to Detective)
Can you still stand on one leg... try it...
(to Everyone)
try to stand on one leg.

Everyone tries. No one except the Detective can and he is very wobbly.

TERRY
He's the only one who has a chance confronting Hank... We'd be useless up close... Is there anyway that you could make that power reverse from out here...

DAN
I don't think so... there's a triangular set in there and someone has to get to it and turn it around 180°.

CUT TO:

MAIN CITY - NIGHT

Mr. Barko's smiling face... big cigar as he watches the tail end of a performance of Ronnie Rocket. The music is pounding away.

MR. BARKO
(to Mr. Green)
See, the kid's doing fine.

They continue to watch Ronnie. Ronnie gets weaker and weaker.

MR. BARKO (CONT'D)
(yelling to the band)
Give him more juice!!!

He hand signals "more juice" and Fred pushes gingerly on the lever. When Ronnie doesn't show much improvement, Fred inches the lever forward more and more. Ronnie starts sparking and smoking and vibrating on the floor, but luckily, for him, the song is over. When Johnny unplugs him, Ronnie falls over and lays still.

Backstage, the doctor and the band are laying Ronnie on the cot. Ronnie is having a strange fit. His eyes are rolled back and his back is arched and he's biting his tongue. Mr. Barko is there watching Ronnie although he's the only one who really isn't aware of Ronnie's deteriorating condition.

MR. BARKO
Whatdya mean? Whatdya mean?-

DOCTOR
I told you I didn't know how Pink and Platinum did this. He's dying I'm telling you!! I can't figure out what they did.

MR. BARKO
I told you to watch them... see what they did!!!

DOCTOR
I'll try to do something for him, but I don't know how.

Ronnie is convulsing pretty bad.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
You guys better clear out.

As the band leaves, the Doctor begins to check various areas of Ronnie. Mr. Barko watches him.

MR. BARKO
Whatdya think?

DOCTOR
I don't know how he works!!! Maybe just let him rest.

MR. BARKO
All right, he can rest for a while, maybe a few days.

DOCTOR
Maybe a few weeks.

MR. BARKO
A few days.

Ronnie is writhing around now and the bag on the chest device is dripping out green smoking fluid. Ronnie is gasping for more air and he's sweating.

INNER CITY - NIGHT

BOB
Dan?

DAN
Yeah Bob?

BOB

If we use Riley's box there... and tie into these lines using the negative of our RZ patterns...

DAN
We'll interrupt the power every 15 minutes!!!

BOB
This is what I meant!

DEBORAH
Bobby!! What does it mean?

DAN
It means that if the Detective can get in there and find that triangulator we can cut Hank's power by fifty percent every fifteen minutes. It may mean that he will be clear enough to think and act during that time.

TERRY
(excited)
I can use that time to try and untie Hank's shoes...

DAN
What's that?

DETECTIVE
It's a long story but, if his shoes are untied and if he knows it, he might get real mad and if he does it'll cut his power even more.

BOB
That's good.

DAN
All right... then Bob, Deborah and I--along with Riley will try to get this power interrupted for you... Terry will try to untie Hank's shoes... And you find the triangulator and possibly confront Hank. When the power lowers you will reverse the triangular.

DEBORAH
And then what?

RILEY
It'll be a whole new ball game if we get that far.

DETECTIVE
Let's go.

DAN
We'll get as close as possible to tap in...

TERRY
The Detective and I will go it alone from there.

BOB
Good luck to you.

DETECTIVE
Good luck to us all.

TERRY
One more thing... when we go in... we're gonna be loaded with needles and pins!! We gotta be!! OK?

ALL
OK.

At night, Ronnie is resting in his cot. He has pillows stacked up behind him and he's in a sitting position. He's dozing and then waking, then dozing. The band members are getting dressed up to go out. They are wearing fancy black suits and fancy shoes. The room is all smokey from their cigarettes. When Ronnie wakes, he calls out for Dan and Bob.

RONNIE
Bob?... Dan?

The rest of the band pays no attention. They continue to dress. When they're finished, they begin gathering at the door by Ronnie's bed. Fred gets an idea and goes to his bass which is leaning against the wall, plugs it in, then plugs Ronnie in. Ronnie is dozing again. Suddenly, Fred turns the controls on his bass up

full and hits it against the wall. Ronnie bolts forward and lets out a horrified painfilled scream. Everyone laughs. Ronnie starts swallowing in a funny way.

JOHNNY
Hey, let's get outta here anyway. I can't breathe in here.

AL
I can't breathe in here either. Let's go.

They all file out. They don't say goodbye or anything to Ronnie. Ronnie is left alone and he has been hurt by Fred's trick. He's trying to keep from vomiting and he's scared looking... he keeps swallowing and holding his throat. Soon, though, he vomits up a little blood. His eyes tear up and he cries.

RONNIE
(crying softly)
Bob?... Dan?

He tries to wipe off the blood from his bed. He leans back continuing to cry softly alone in the room.

Mr. Barko's face close up. He's speaking on the telephone. His cigar is going up and down in his mouth. Behind his sweaty heavy face are venetian blinds.

MR. BARKO
We've had a little trouble, but he'll be there... don't worry. We're going to go all out. That little bastard's going to do the show of his life even if it kills him. Everyone thinks he's slacked off? Well, just wait. He'll be there with bells on. Ronnie Rocket will be there. You tell 'em. The little bastard will be there with bells on.

The doctor is in with Ronnie. Ronnie is asleep. The doctor lifts an eyelid and peers into the eye with a little light. The doctor then gives Ronnie a shot and then leaves the room. Ronnie's warning signals goes off and he pulls himself to a sitting position. He gets his plug and spotting the nearest outlet begins to crawl over to it. He is just barely there when four groupie girls sneak into his room. Ronnie turns. They begin ooohing and ahhing as they circle him. Ronnie lies helpless by the wall. The girls come in

closer. They begin to touch him. They keep saying his name... "RONNIE ROCKET" over and over again. One of them gets bold enough to kiss him, then the others yell and giggle out "let me, let me"... Pretty soon they are all pressed in on him kissing him and feeling him, and showing him their breasts.

Just then the CLEANING LADY comes in to sweep and mop. She spots the girls all over Ronnie.

CLEANING LADY
Get away from him... get on out of here... OUT!! OUT!!

She swings her mop at them and the girls go running out screaming. The screams die off. Ronnie again tries to plug himself in but the cleaning lady is on him.

CLEANING LADY
... now you get back in bed. You shouldn't ought to be out on the floor, that's where I'm going to mop. I'll just set you right back where you belong in that bed of yours. My little girl... she talks about you... yes, she does... she thinks you're somethin' special. You're just a little red headed animal, I say... she'd like a tuft of your hair, I'll bet. I'm just going to get her a tuft of your hair. I'm just going to

When she pulls at his hair, the wig comes off.

CLEANING LADY
... oh my God... he's bald. Well, I'll just tell my little girl about this and bring her one of your real hairs.

She plucks out one of the long fat brown hairs. It makes Ronnie whine when she pulls it out. She puts the hair in her pocket.

CLEANING LADY (CONT'D)
I'll just tell her about you... you're just a mess. My God, I'm going to get another one of your hairs for my little girl's friend.

She goes and starts plucking out another.

MAIN CITY - NIGHT

A marquee above the concert hall saying:

"RONNIE ROCKET
ELECTRA-CUTE
BIG SAX BAND
and BILL X"

Inside, the audience is loud and gets louder when the M.C. comes out on stage.

Backstage, Mr. Barko grabs Fred before he gets into position with his bass.

MR. BARKO
I want him hot tonight, don't be afraid to goose him real good. I mean it, I want him HOT!!

FRED
All right, Mr. Barko I will.

He joins the band on stage. The M.C. is just saying "and now... Ronnie Rocket." The curtain opens. The audience screams when they see Ronnie. Johnny plugs him in. Fred has the lever set at five. Johnny hits his guitar and Ronnie shoots a scream spark forty feet into the audience. The band begins to go. Ronnie twitches to the beat and makes his sounds. When he begins to falter his eyes-roll back and his head bounces up and down and he falls down. Fred knows to up the lever to a higher number. It now goes up to six. Ronnie's face shows pain. We get closer and closer to his pain-filled face.

INNER CITY - NIGHT

The group of six, Bob, Dan, Deborah, Riley, Terry and the Detective approach Hank Bartells Power Station which looms absolutely gigantic in front of them. Bloody knitting needles and pins stick out all over each of them. Surrounding the entrance to the power station are hundreds of black coats, donut men and thin sick dogs. The dogs are either gagging horribly or snarling with teeth sticking out. The closer the group gets the harder it is for them to walk or talk.

DETECTIVE

You guys better stop here and tap in or you'll never be able to remember what to do.

BOB
Huh?

TERRY
Beats me.

DETECTIVE
Oh oh...

The Detective reaches to each of them and jabs the needles in deeper and harder. He sees their glazed eyes focus once again.

DETECTIVE
Tap in here you guys.

DAN
OK...

Dan, Bob, Deborah and Riley start to leave the group but the black coats drive them back.

DETECTIVE
Oh no.

TERRY
Looks like Hank wants us all inside...

BOB
We shoulda stayed back where we were.

DETECTIVE
Too late now... just keep those needles killing ya with pain, when we get in... same plan... OK?

ALL
OK.

They enter the power station. Tremendous electrical arcings and humming sounds. The light is very dim. The groups starts down a huge metal corridor and with each step the evil power of Hank Bartells increases. Soon only Terry and the Detective can walk. The rest of the group is zapped by the black coats and carried

through a small doorway off the corridor. Donut men appear laughing wildly with huge grins. They follow behind Terry and the Detective. Soon Terry drops and he's carried off by the donut men after they zap him with the electrical guns. Now the corridor is completely empty. The lights are dimming rapidly. The Detective walks ahead slowly. Fear is building inside the Detective. He senses a presence at the end of the corridor. Sweat begins to break out on his forehead. As he reaches the end a figure slowly emerges. Hank Bartells.

HANK
The Detective... I've been waiting for you... this is the night Ronald dies.

DETECTIVE
Well I've been wallingeet ubol.

MAIN CITY: THE CONCERT CONTINUES.

On the stage. Electra-Cute is tap dancing and singing while she glows. Her glow begins to diminish so she tap dances over to Ronnie, who is holding the microphone and screaming, and gets another jolt of electricity from him. She lights up very bright and the power of the jolt causes her to scream also and tap dance very fast. Ronnie's box, which Fred has, is now up to seven.

INNER CITY.

The Detective is facing Hank Bartells. He struggles to speak but cannot. He turns suddenly and behind him is a gigantic theater filled to capacity with thousands of men who look like Hank Bartells. They all wear black rimmed plastic thick lensed glasses like Hanks. Some carry circle banners. Behind them on the back wall is a giant symbol of a circle in white neon light.

Suddenly the Detective is on a stage in front of the vast audience of Hank look-a-likes. Black coats deposit Riley, Bob, Dan, Deborah and Terry on the floor of the stage. The audience goes wild. No one including the Detective can stand up. All writhe spasmodically on the floor. Dan and Bob try to work with Riley's black box but all they can really do is drool and slobber on it. Now Hank Bartells enters the stage. The audience applauds and cheers until the sound thunders. The Detective digs his knitting needles in deeper but it does no good. He can barely focus his eyes. Hank Bartells walks around the Detective.

HANK

(loud to audience)
He can stand on one leg. WATCH!
(to Detective)
Stand on one leg and I'll bring the triangulator out to show you!

The Detective writhes wildly on the floor. He tries desperately to stand on two legs, let alone one but he can't. The audience again is wild.

MAIN CITY: THE CONCERT CONTINUES

The audience is wild. Ronnie, on the floor, bleeding and screaming.

INNER CITY

Park turns to his audience of thousands of Hanks.

HANK
(to audience)
He is a Detective. He can give the Detective's motto. LISTEN!
(to Detective)
Say the Detective's motto and I will let you turn the triangular. Here is the triangulator now.

Suddenly, moving across the stage is small stand on wheels. On top of the stand sits the triangulator. It is a beautiful device. Actually it is made up of two triangles forming a diamond shape. At the points at either end two cords come out and one at each end is plugged into the stand. A big fat cord runs off behind stage. The triangulator is all that stands in the way of success now but the evil power of Hank is overwhelming.

HANK
(smiling to the Detective)
Can you turn it?
(he laughs)

The entire audience laughs hysterically as the Detective struggles to say the motto.

HANK
(to Detective)
Come... stand on one leg... say the motto.

The Detective is upside down standing on his head. His legs bend in a multitude of impossible positions. His arms flip and twist into knots. He cannot speak. Only garble comes out.

Hank now motions to an orchestra in the pit below the stage. This orchestra is the same one from the circle club. They begin to play a strange rhythmic dining music in time with the Detective garble and physical spasms like a modern dance in hell. The audience of Hanks laughs hysterically.

HANK
(to Detective)
Look.

Hank raises his hands and he shoots lightening bolts with a thunder clap sound which rocks the stage. The back curtains open revealing a wall of fire two hundred feet high. Inside the fire thousands of souls scream silently for help. The Detective tries to focus on this horror. He tries to scream. Across the stage the fire causes Deborah to flip over onto Bob. Their lips meet. Bob's eyes focus.

BOB
Where are we?

DEBORAH
I don't know ... I thought I was dead.

BOB
Your kiss... your love... it saved me... Kiss Dan... we have to hurry.

Deborah's flies over and kisses the gyrating Dan.

DAN
What? Oh! What? Oh!!! Where's the box.

BOB
Stay right with us Deborah... Kiss Riley...

She kisses Riley and he awakes, at least as awake as they are which isn't much considering Hank's continuing horror power. Riley fishes the black box out from under his shirt. Bob finds a section of the fat wire coming off the triangulator and taps in. Dan, Bob, Deborah, and Riley all cling to each other. Deborah kisses each of

them constantly to keep them conscious. Dan adjusts the black box for the negative RZ pattern. They watch the Detective and wait.

MAIN CITY: CONCERT

On the stage now, Fred is putting the needle up to eight because there is some movement at eight. Mr. Barko can't stand watching anymore and comes out on stage--behind the equipment, catches Fred's attention and Fred gives him the box. Mr. Barko immediately shoves the levers to the highest at ten. Ronnie starts vibrating and bleeding and screaming then gets up, but just holds on to the microphone screaming.

INNER CITY

Terry is struggling to focus on the shoes of Hank Bartells. He sees to his horror that not only are Hank's shoes tied but they are double tied! He crawls about under Hanks nose trying to untie the laces of at least one of the shoes, Hank laughs at Terry's antics. He thinks Terry is trying to stop him from tormenting his friend the Detective.

HANK
You are trying to keep me from your friend here... you are a nuisance... so, I will kill you both...
(then more strange laughter)
Watch the floor.

At this the floor begins to slide steadily toward the wall of fire and the screaming burning multitudes beyond.

HANK
(to Detective)
Hurry! Soon the floor will move you to the fire where you will die the death. For you... I will make you into a dog bone and my dogs will feed on you for 100 years. See yourself as a dog bone.

The Detective looks up. Now the wall of flames becomes transparent--barely perceptible. Behind the flames he now sees himself. Gigantic. White. Bone. Parts of him are chewn away. Forty or fifty small sickening little dogs chew feverishly on his dog bone body.

MAIN CITY: CONCERT

Mr. Barko runs the lever down a bit then back up. Ronnie is still screaming. The music is intense. Ronnie falls over as Mr. Barko brings the lever down then he goes up when the lever goes up. Electra Cute is running a little low now and she dances over to get another shock from Ronnie. Fred looks at the lever at ten, then at Electra Cute, but yells at her too late. She touches Ronnie and the power blows her across the stage and she turns into a black burnt cinder in a dress. The music seems to get louder then, and the crowd roars.

INNER CITY

The audience is applauding and now stamping their feet. The fire has returned. It burns even hotter. The souls tormented crying is now audible. The moving floor has now brought the Detective and his friends closer to the end of the stage and their final fall into the sea of fire.

Terry's sore is bleeding profusely where, he is jabbing at it. The pain intensifies and his eyes focus. His fingers dart out around Hank's feet--busily untying Hank's shoelaces. Hank takes delight in stamping on Terry's fingers but the pain it causes only helps Terry. After one very hard stamp (probably snapping some delicate finger bones in Terry's hands) the audience laughs uproariously.

TERRY
(under his breath)
Thank you Hank... between you stamping and my bleeding sore I am able to do my work. HA HA!!

Bob, Dan, Deborah and Riley are still clinging to each other.

BOB
Any minute now there should be a noticeable decrease in Hank's power.

DAN
It'll only last a second or two... the Detective has to be ready to take advantage of it!!

RILEY
Look... Terry has got one lace untied!!!

DEBORAH

It's getting hotter my darlings. Will we be in time!! Remember!!! I love you boys... with all my heart... This is the way I believe--Love is the most beautiful thing.

MAIN CITY - NIGHT: CONCERT

The Big Sax Band plays heavy music. Ronnie's head bangs up and down on the floor, bleeding.

INNER CITY

Hank Bartells jumps toward the Detective and now he makes his head change into the head of a dog. He growls and moans. With the audience cheering Hank raises his fingers and blows open the Detective's chest with electric power.

DEBORAH
No... No!!!

THE DETECTIVE IS SO DISTORTED NOW, HE LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE RONNIE LOOKED IN THE HOSPITAL BASEMENT. Inside the Detective's chest his heart is pounding. Smoke billows out, the souls in the fire scream now very loud. The floor is moving the Detective dangerously close to the fire. The Detective's eye roll about desperately trying to focus. His lungs are wheezing. His veins and arteries pounding along with his swollen smoking heart. Sweat is pouring off his brow. Hank changes back to Hank and smiles close to the Detective's face. The Detective struggles to turn away. His eyes focus on something deep within the oncoming fire. He struggles to see and then it finally becomes clear. He sees Diana within the fire. She sees him. He screams. He head turns in anger to Hank Bartells. His eyes roll to Terry. His brain perceives that Hank's shoelaces are untied. He swings his ever so heavy head and he sees the black box all tapped in Bob, Dan, Deborah, and Riley waiting in a huddle for the right time. He sees the fire looming close. He hears the power of the electricity the screams of Ronnie. The screams and soundings of the audience. The swelling sound of the twisted music from the ultimate discordant orchestra. He sees DIANA... He sees RONNIE.

Now instantly the power drops. Hank turns--stunned! The Detective tries to remember what to do. Terry waits. Bob, Dan, Deborah and Riley wait.

Suddenly -

DETECTIVE
HEY HANK YOUR SHOE LACES ARE UNTIED!!!

Hank looks down. He sees! As his head comes up the loudest yell imaginable rushes forth from his mouth. Also fire shoots out with this yell. The fire burns outward, cutting a swath through the audience of Hanks (killing many of them) and ending by blowing a huge hole in the circumference of the giant glowing circle symbol in the back of the theatre.

The Detective lurches forward and grabs the triangulator. He grasps it firmly. His friends watch with profound relief as he turns the triangular perfectly so that all the electricity in the city is reversed. There is a nice solid "click" as the new position locks.

There is silence. A pause. Then... Hank's head falls off. Then he collapses. A wind blows all the Hank audience away to darkness and moaning.

The fire turns to white light. Light radiates. The souls begin to float.

The orchestra music becomes perfection. The music is beautiful and powerful.

In a powerful rhythm lights begin to pop on outside destroying the darkness and destroying the donut men and the black coats. They burst into flame and become part of the new light.

The Detective (now looking very good and normal), Terry, Bob, Dan, Deborah and Riley all stand. Smile. Diana floats out of the light toward the Detective, a happy smile of love.

The city lights up with a golden morning light from a gigantic new sun.

Ronnie glows white hot on the stage and floats up. The crowd chants Ronnie Rocket - some yell "he's floating... he's... he's..."

The Band and all around him disappears in golden white light.

Ronnie floats up golden in space.

The Detective, Terry, Bob, Dan, Deborah, Diana, Riley, all float and merge inside of Ronnie.

The whole city is golden inside of Ronnie.

Ronnie sings his love song.

Ronnie is a golden egg.

The egg appears in a room now. The room has an ocean for a floor. In the room many tiny golden eggs float. A small girl sits on her father's lap. We see the strangely beautiful girl but the father's back is to us.

LITTLE GIRL
Father... when will all the new universes be born?

FATHER
Soon... and when they are I'm going to get you a great big chocolate to celebrate!

LITTLE GIRL
Oh Father... really?

She hugs him. And as they get up to leave...

We leave with one little golden egg across the room to a blue lady with four arms who is doing a strange dance on a lilly pad. One arm stops dancing and reaches out. A finger touches the one little golden egg. The woman smiles and laughs.

BLUE WOMAN
Ronnie Rocket!

THE END